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A. K. H. B.

## UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.

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FROM THE CAPE TO CAIRO.	E. S. Grogan.
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THROUGH FINLAND IN CARTS.	Mrs. Alec Tweedie.
THE VOYAGE OF THE "DISCOVERY."—I. & II.	Captain Scott.
FELICITY IN FRANCE.	Constance E. Maud.
MY CLIMBS IN THE ALPS AND CAUCASUS.	A. F. Mummery.
JOHN BRIGHT.	R. Barry O'Brien.
POVERTY.	B. Seebohm Rowntree.
SEA WOLVES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.	
	Commander E. Hamilton Currey, R.N.
FAMOUS MODERN BATTLES.	A. Hilliard Atteridge.
THE CRUISE OF THE "FALCON."	E. F. Knight.

*Etc., etc.*

*Others to follow.*



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# A. K. H. B.

A VOLUME OF SELECTIONS

EDITED BY HIS SON



THOMAS NELSON AND SONS  
LONDON, EDINBURGH, DUBLIN  
AND NEW YORK

*Quot fessos homines, quot tristia corda, quot aegros  
Quot passim indociles otia longa pati,  
Te 'recreans,' scriptis recreasti, Rustice Pastor,  
Nec tot post annos charta diserta silet!—  
Non equidem invideo: miror magis; et prece posco,  
Haec vita in tantis dum sit agenda malis,  
Ut, saliens veluti in deserto jugis aquae fons,  
Ingenii exudans sic tua vena fluat!*

—BISHOP WORDSWORTH OF ST. ANDREWS.



## NOTE.

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THIS little book is made up of essays and shorter extracts from the writings of the Very Rev. A. K. H. Boyd, D.D., LL.D. of St. Andrews, "best known," as some one has written of him, "under the disguise of his numerous initials," and "probably better known," says the *Dictionary of National Biography*, "than any other Scottish clergyman of his day."

He was born in 1825 at the manse of Auchinleck in Ayrshire, and was originally destined for the English Bar. After nearly completing his legal training, however, he relinquished the idea of the law, returned to Scotland, and entered the ministry of the Scottish Church. It was when parish minister of Irongray in Galloway that he began those literary labours which first brought him celebrity. The series known as "The Recreations of a Country Parson" appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*, and were issued in book form in 1859. The second and third series under the same title were published in 1861 and 1878. Among his other works may be mentioned *The Autumn Holidays of a Country Parson* (1864), *Lessons of Middle Age* (1868), *Landscapes, Churches and Moralities* (1874), and *Our Little Life*, two series (1882 and 1884).

In 1865 he was appointed to the first charge of St. Andrews, and for the rest of his life was associated with

the old university town. His fame as a preacher was great, and the chance of hearing him was one of the attractions of a visit to the East Neuk. He played a large part in Scottish Church life, and his name will always be associated with the many improvements in the beauty and seemliness of its services which recent years have seen. He was a friend of all the chief Scotsmen of his day, as well as of men like Archbishop Whately, James Anthony Froude, Charles Kingsley, and Bishop Thorold of Winchester. In 1890, nine years before his death, he was selected as Moderator of the Scottish Church.

The extracts in this volume have been taken from the works already mentioned. The briefer excerpts are mainly from the first and second volumes of *Twenty-five Years of St. Andrews* (1892), *St. Andrews and Elsewhere* (1894), and *Last Years of St. Andrews* (1896). The selection has been made by the author's fourth son, Mr. Charles Boyd, who desires to thank Mr. E. V. Lucas for first suggesting the volume, and Sir William Robertson Nicoll and Professor Hepburn Millar of Edinburgh for their advice and help.

Save where a footnote by the author states the year in which a particular chapter was written, the date of publication of the volume in which such appeared is given at its close.

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# A. K. H. B.

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## I.—ESSAYS.

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### I.

#### CONCERNING THE COUNTRY PARSON'S LIFE.

THIS is Monday morning. It is a beautiful sun-shiny morning early in July. I am sitting on the steps that lead to my door, somewhat tired by the duty of yesterday, but feeling very restful and thankful. Before me there is a little expanse of the brightest grass, too little to be called a lawn, very soft and mossy, and very carefully mown. It is shaded by three noble beeches, about two hundred years old. The sunshine around has a green tinge from the reflection of the leaves. Double hedges, thick and tall, the inner one of gleaming beech, shut out all sight of a country lane that runs hard by: a lane into which this gravelled sweep of would-be avenue enters, after winding deftly through evergreens, rich and old, so as to make the utmost of its little length. On the side furthest from the lane, the miniature lawn opens into a garden of no great extent, and beyond the garden you see a green field sloping upwards to a wood which bounds the view. One-half of the front of the house is covered to the roof by a climbing rose-tree, so rich

now with cluster roses that you see only the white soft masses of fragrance. Crimson roses and fuchsias cover half-way up the remainder of the front wall ; and the sides of the flight of steps are green with large-leaved ivy. If ever there was a dwelling embosomed in great trees and evergreens, it is here. Everything grows beautifully : oaks, horse-chestnuts, beeches ; laurels, yews, hollies ; lilacs and hawthorn trees. Off a little way on the right, graceful in stem, in branches, in the pale bark, in the light-green leaves, I see my especial pet, a fair acacia. This is the true country ; not the poor shadow of it which you have near great and smoky towns. That sapphire air is polluted by no factory chimney. Smoke is a beauty here, there is so little of it : rising thin and blue from the cottage ; hospitable and friendly-looking from the rare mansion. The town is five miles distant ; there is not even a village near. Green fields are all about ; hawthorn hedges and rich hedge-rows ; great masses of wood everywhere. But this is Scotland : and there is no lack of hills and rocks, of little streams and waterfalls ; and two hundred yards off, winding round that churchyard whose white stones you see by glimpses through old oak branches, a large river glides swiftly by.

It is a quiet and beautiful scene ; and it pleases me to think that Britain has thousands and thousands like it. But of course none, in my mind, equal this : for this has been my home for five years.

I have been sitting here for an hour, with a book on my knee ; and upon that a piece of paper, whereon I have been noting down some thoughts for the sermon which I hope to write during this week, and to preach next Sunday in that little parish church of which you can see a corner of a gable through the oaks which surround the churchyard. I have not

been able to think very connectedly, indeed: for two little feet have been pattering round me, two little hands pulling at me occasionally, and a little voice entreating that I should come and have a race upon the green. Of course I went: for like most men who are not very great or very bad, I have learned, for the sake of the little owner of the hands and the voice, to love every little child. Several times, too, I have been obliged to get up and make a dash at a very small weed which I discerned just appearing through the gravel; and once or twice my man-servant has come to consult me about matters connected with the garden and the stable. My sermon will be the better for all these interruptions. I do not mean to say that it will be absolutely good, though it will be as good as I can make it: but it will be better for the races with my little girl, and for the thoughts about my horse, than it would have been if I had not been interrupted at all. The Roman Catholic Church meant it well: but it was far mistaken when it thought to make a man a better parish priest by cutting him off from domestic ties, and quite emancipating him from all the little worries of domestic life. *That* might be the way to get men who would preach an unpractical religion, not human in interest, not able to comfort, direct, sustain through daily cares, temptations, and sorrows. But for preaching which will come home to men's business and bosoms, which will not appear to ignore those things which must of necessity occupy the greatest part of an ordinary mortal's thoughts, commend me to the preacher who has learned by experience what are human ties, and what is human worry.

It is a characteristic of country life, that living in the country you have so many cares outside. In town, you have nothing to think of (I mean in the

way of little material matters) beyond the walls of your dwelling. It is not your business to see to the paving of the street before your door ; and if you live in a square, you are not individually responsible for the tidiness of the shrubbery in its centre. When you come home, after the absence of a week or a month, you have nothing to look round upon and see that it is right. The space within the house's walls is not a man's proper province. Your library-table and your books are all the domain which comes within the scope of your orderly spirit. But if you live in the country, in a house of your own with even a few acres of land attached to it, you have a host of things to think of when you come home from your week's or month's absence ; you have an endless number of little things worrying you to take a turn round and see that they are all as they should be. You can hardly sit down and rest for their tugging at you. Is the grass all trimly mown ? Has the pruning been done that you ordered ? Has that rose-tree been trained ? Has that bit of fence been mended ? Are all the walks perfectly free from weeds ? Is there not a gap left in box-wood edgings ? and are the edges of all walks through grass sharp and clearly defined ? Has that nettly corner of a field been made tidy ? Has any one been stealing the fruit ? Have the neighbouring cows been in your clover ? How about the stable ?—any fractures of the harness ?—any scratches on the carriage ?—anything amiss with the horse or horses ? All these, and innumerable questions more, press on the man who looks after matters for himself, when he arrives at home.

Still, there is good in all this. That which in a desponding mood you call a worry, in a cheerful mood you think a source of simple, healthful interest in life. And there is one case in particular, in which I doubt

not the reader of simple and natural tastes (and such may all my readers be) has experienced, if he be a country parson not too rich or great, the benefit of these gentle counter-irritants. It is when you come home, leaving your wife and children for a little while behind you. It is autumn: you are having your holiday: you have all gone to the sea-side. You have been away two or three weeks; and you begin to think that you ought to let your parishioners see that you have not forgotten them. You resolve to go home for ten days, which shall include two Sundays with their duty. You have to travel a hundred and thirty miles. So on a Friday morning you bid your little circle good-bye, and set off alone. It is not, perhaps, an extreme assumption that you are a man of sound sense and feeling, and not a selfish conceited humbug: and, the case being so, you are not ashamed to confess that you are somewhat saddened by even that short parting; and that various thoughts obtrude themselves of possible accident and sorrow before you meet again. It is only ten days, indeed: but a wise man is recorded to have once advised his fellow-men in words which run as follows, 'Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.' And as you sail along in the steamer, and sweep along in the train, you are thinking of the little things that not without tears bade their governor farewell. It was early morning when you left: and as you proceed on your solitary journey, the sun ascends to noon, and declines towards evening. You have read your newspaper: there is no one else in that compartment of the carriage: and hour after hour you grow more and more dull and down-hearted. At length, as the sunset is gilding the swept harvest-fields, you reach the quiet little railway station among the hills. It is wonderful to see it. There is no

village: hardly a dwelling in sight: there are rocky hills all round; great trees; and a fine river, by following which the astute engineer led his railway to this seemingly inaccessible spot. You alight on that primitive platform, with several large trees growing out of it, and with a waterfall at one end of it: and beyond the little palisade, you see your trap (let me not say carriage), your man-servant, your horse, perhaps your pair. How kindly and pleasant the expression even of the horse's back! How unlike the bustle of a railway station in a large town! The train goes, the brass of the engine red in the sunset; and you are left in perfect stillness. Your baggage is stowed, and you drive away gently. It takes some piloting to get down the steep slope from this out-of-the-way place. What a change from the thunder of the train to this audible quiet! You interrogate your servant first in the comprehensive question, if all is right. Relieved by his general affirmative answer, you descend into particulars. Any one sick in the parish? how was the church attended on the Sundays you were away? how is Jenny, who had the fever; and John, who had the paralytic stroke? How are the servants? how is the horse; the cow; the pig; the dog? How is the garden progressing? how about fruit? how about flowers? There was an awful thunderstorm on Wednesday: the people thought it was the end of the world. Two bullocks were killed: and thirteen sheep. Widow Wiggins' son had deserted from the army, and had come home. The harvest-home at such a farm is to-night: may Thomas go? What a little quiet world is the country parish: what a microcosm even the country parsonage! You are interested and pleased: you are getting over your stupid feeling of depression. You are interested in all these little matters, not because you have grown a

gossiping, little-minded man, but because you know it is fit and right and good for you to be interested in such things. You have five or six miles to drive: never less: the scene grows always more homely and familiar as you draw nearer home. And arrived at last, what a deal to look at! What a welcome on the servants' faces: such a contrast to the indifferent looks of servants in a town. You hasten to your library-table to see what letters await you: country-folk are always a little nervous about their letters, as half expecting, half fearing, half hoping, some vague, great, undefined event. You see the snug fire: the chamber so precisely arranged, and so fresh-looking: you remark it and value it fifty times more amid country fields and trees than you would turning out of the manifest life and civilisation of the city street. You are growing cheerful and thankful now; but before it grows dark, you must look round out of doors: and *that* makes you entirely thankful and cheerful. Surely the place has grown greener and prettier since you saw it last! You walk about the garden and the shrubbery: the gravel is right, the grass is right, the trees are right, the hedges are right, everything is right. You go to the stable-yard: you pat your horse, and pull his ears, and enjoy seeing his snug resting-place for the night. You peep into the cow-house, now growing very dark: you glance into the abode of the pig: the dog has been capering about you all this while. You are not too great a man to take pleasure in these little things. And now when you enter your library again, where your solitary meal is spread, you sit down in the mellow lamplight, and feel quite happy. How different it would have been to have walked out of a street-cab into a town-house, with nothing beyond its walls to think of!

This is so sunshiny a day, and everything is looking so cheerful and beautiful, that I know my present testimony to the happiness of the country parson's life must be received with considerable reservation. Just at the present hour, I am willing to declare that I think the life of a country clergyman, in a pretty parish, with a well-conducted and well-to-do population, and with a fair living, is as happy, useful, and honourable as the life of man can be. Your work is all of a pleasant kind; you have, generally speaking, not too much of it; the fault is your own if you do not meet much esteem and regard among your parishioners of all degrees; you feel you are of some service in your generation: you have intellectual labours and tastes which keep your mind from growing rusty, and which admit you into a wide field of pure enjoyment: you have pleasant country cares to divert your mind from head-work, and to keep you for hours daily in the open air, in a state of pleasurable interest; your little children grow up with green fields about them, and pure air to breathe: and if your heart be in your sacred work, you feel, Sunday by Sunday, and day by day, a solid enjoyment in telling your fellow-creatures the Good News you are commissioned to address to them, which it is hard to describe to another, but which you humbly and thankfully take and keep. You have not, indeed, the excitement and the exhilaration of commanding the attention of a large educated congregation: those are reserved for the popular clergyman of a city parish. But then, you are free from the temptation to attempt the unworthy arts of the clap-trap mob-orator, or to preach mainly to display your own talents and eloquence; you have striven to exclude all personal ambition; and, forgetting yourself or what people may think of yourself, to preach simply for the good

of your fellow-sinners, and for the glory of that kind Master whom you serve. And around you there are none of those heart-breaking things which must crush the earnest clergyman in a large town : no destitution ; poverty, indeed, but no starvation : and although evil will be wherever man is, nothing of the gross, daring, shocking vice which is matured in the dens of the great city. The cottage children breathe a confined atmosphere while within the cottage ; but they have only to go to the door, and the pure air of heaven is about them, and they live in it most of their waking hours. Very different with the pale children of a like class in the city, who do but exchange the infected chamber for the filthy lane, and whose eyes are hardly ever gladdened by the sight of a green field. And when the diligent country parson walks or drives about his parish, not without a decided feeling of authority and ownership, he knows every man, woman, and child he meets, and all their concerns and cares. Still, even on this charming morning, I do not forget that it depends a good deal upon the parson's present mood, what sort of account he may give of his country parish and his parochial life. If he have been recently cheated by a well-to-do farmer in the price of some farm produce ; if he have seen a humble neighbour deliberately forcing his cow through a weak part of the hedge into a rich pasture-field of the glebe, and then have found him ready to swear that the cow trespassed entirely without his knowledge or will ; if he meet a hulking fellow carrying in the twilight various rails from a fence to be used as firewood ; if, on a warm summer day, the whole congregation falls fast asleep during the sermon ; if a farmer tells him what a bad and dishonest man a discharged man-servant was, some weeks after the parson had found that out for himself and packed off

the dishonest man ; if certain of the cottagers near appear disposed to live entirely, instead of only partially, of the parsonage larder ; the poor parson may sometimes be found ready to wish himself in town, compact within a house in a street with no back-door ; and not spreading out such a surface, as in the country he must, for petty fraud and peculation. But, after all, the country parson's great worldly cross lies for the most part in his poverty, and in the cares which arise out of that. It is not always so, indeed. In the lot of some the happy medium has been reached ; they have found the 'neither poverty nor riches' of the wise man's prayer. Would that it were so with all ! For how it must cripple a clergyman's usefulness, how abate his energies, how destroy his eloquence, how sicken his heart, how narrow and degrade his mind, how tempt (as it has sometimes done) to unfair and dishonest shifts and expedients, to go about not knowing how to make the ends meet, not seeing how to pay what he owes ! If I were a rich man, how it would gladden me to send a fifty-pound note to certain houses I have seen ! What a dead weight it would lift from the poor wife's heart ! Ah ! I can think of the country parson, like poor Sydney Smith, adding his accounts, calculating his little means, wondering where he can pinch or pare any closer, till the poor fellow bends down his stupefied head and throbbing temples on his hands, and wishes he could creep into a quiet grave. God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb ; or I should wonder how it does not drive some country parsons mad, to think what would become of their children if they were taken away. It is the warm nest upon the rotten bough. They need abundant faith ; let us trust they get it. But in a desponding mood, I can well imagine such a one resolving that no child of

his shall ever enter upon a course in life which has brought himself such misery as he has known.

I have been writing down some thoughts, as I have said, for the sermon of next Sunday. To-morrow morning I shall begin to write it fully out. Some individuals, I am aware, have maintained that listening to a sermon is irksome work ; but to a man whose tastes lie in that way, the writing of sermons is most pleasant occupation. It does you good. Unless you are a mere false pretender, you cannot try to impress any truth forcibly upon the hearts of others, without impressing it forcibly upon your own. All that you will ever make other men feel, will be only a subdued reflection of what you yourself have felt. And sermon-writing is a task that is divided into many stages. You begin afresh every week : you come to an end every week. If you are writing a book, the end appears very far away. If you find that although you do your best, you yet treat some part of your subject badly, you know that the bad passage remains as a permanent blot : and you work on under the cross-influence of that recollection. But if, with all your pains, this week's sermon is poor, why, you hope to do better next week. You seek a fresh field : you try again. No doubt, in preaching your sermons you are somewhat annoyed by rustic boorishness and want of thought. Various bumpkins will forget to close the door behind them when they enter church too late, as they not unfrequently do. Various men with great hob-nailed shoes, entering late, instead of quietly slipping into a pew close to the door, will stamp noisily up the passage to the further extremity of the church. Various faces will look up at you week by week, hopelessly blank of all interest or intelligence. Some human beings will not merely sleep, but loudly evince that they are sleeping. Well, you gradually cease to

be worried by these little things. At first, they jarred through every nerve ; but you grow accustomed to them. And if you be a man of principle and of sense, you know better than to fancy that amid a rustic people your powers are thrown away. Even if you have in past days been able to interest congregations of the refined and cultivated class, you will now show your talent and your principle at once by accommodating your instruction to the comprehension of the simple souls committed to your care. I confess I have no patience with men who profess to preach sermons carelessly prepared, because they have an uneducated congregation. Nowhere is more careful preparation needed ; but of course it must be preparation of the right sort. Let it be received as an axiom, that the very first aim of the preacher should be to interest. He must interest, before he can hope to instruct or improve. And no matter how filled with orthodox doctrine and good advice a sermon may be, if it put the congregation to sleep, it is an abominably bad sermon.

Surely, I go on to think, this kind of life must affect all the productions of the mind of the man who leads it. There must be a smack of the country, its scenes and its cares, about them all. You walk in shady lanes : you stand and look at the rugged bark of old trees : you help to prune evergreens : you devise flower-gardens and winding walks. You talk to pigs, and smooth down the legs of horses. You sit on mossy walls, and saunter by the river side, and through woodland paths. You grow familiar with the internal arrangements of poor men's dwellings : you see much of men and women in those solemn seasons when all pretences are laid aside ; and they speak with confidence to you of their little cares and fears, for this world and the other. You kneel

down and pray by the bedside of many sick ; and you know the look of the dying face well. Young children, whom you have humbly sought to instruct in the best of knowledge, have passed away from this life in your presence, telling you in interrupted sentences whither they trusted they were going, and bidding you not forget to meet them there. You feel the touch of the weak fingers still ; the parting request is not forgotten. You mark the spring blossoms come back ; and you walk among the harvest sheaves in the autumn evening. And when you ride up the parish on your duty, you feel the influence of bare and lonely tracts, where, ten miles from home, you sometimes dismount from your horse, and sit down on a gray stone by the way-side, and look for an hour at the heather at your feet, and at the sweeps of purple moorland far away. You go down to the churchyard frequently : you sit on the gravestone of your predecessor who died two hundred years since ; and you count five, six, seven spots where those who served the cure before you sleep. Then, leaning your head upon your hand, you look thirty years into the future, and wonder whether you are to grow old. You read, through moss-covered letters, how a former incumbent of the parish died in the last century, aged twenty-eight. That afternoon, coming from a cottage where you had been seeing a frail old woman, you took a flying leap over a brook near, with precipitous sides ; and you thought that some day, if you lived, you would have to creep quietly round by a smoother way. And now you think you see an aged man, tottering and gray, feebly walking down to the churchyard as of old, and seating himself hard by where you sit. The garden will have grown weedy and untidy ; it will not be the trim, precise dwelling which youthful energy and hopefulness keep it now.

Let it be hoped that the old man's hat is not seedy,

nor his coat threadbare : it makes one's heart sore to see *that*. And let it be hoped that he is not alone. But you go home, I think, with a quieter and kindlier heart.

You live in a region, mental and material, that is very entirely out of the track of worldly ambition. You do not blame it in others : you have learnt to blame few things in others severely, except cruelty and falsehood : but you have outgrown it for yourself. You hear, now and then, of this and the other school or college friend becoming a great man. One is an Indian hero : one is attorney-general : one is a cabinet minister. You like to see their names in the newspapers. You remember how in college competitions with them, you did not come off second-best. You are struck at finding that such a man, whom you recollect as a fearful dunce, is getting respectably on through life : you remember how at school you used to wonder whether the difference between the clever boy and the booby would be in after days the same great gulf that it was then. Your life goes on very regularly, each week much like the last. And, on the whole, it is very happy. You saunter for a little in the open air after breakfast : you do so when the evergreens are beautiful with snow as well as when the warm sunshine makes the grass white with widely-opened daisies. Your children go with you wherever you go. You are growing subdued and sobered ; but they are not : and when one sits on your knee, and lays upon your shoulder a little head with golden ringlets, you do not mind very much though your own hair (what is left of it) is getting shot with gray. You sit down in your quiet study to your work : what thousands of pages you have written at that table ! You cease your task at one o'clock : you read your *Times* : you get on horseback and canter up the

parish to see your sick: or you take the ribbons and tool into the county town. You feel the stir of even its quiet existence: you drop into the bookseller's: you grumble at the venerable age of the *Reviews* that come to you from the club. Generally, you cannot be bothered with calls upon your tattling acquaintances: you leave these to your wife. You drive home again, through the shady lanes, away into the green country: your man-servant in his sober livery tells you with pride, when you go to the stable-yard for a few minutes before dinner, that Mr. Snooks, the great judge of horse-flesh, had declared that afternoon in the inn stable in town, that he had not seen a better-kept carriage and harness anywhere, and that your plump steed was a noble creature. It is well when a servant is proud of his belongings: he will be a happier man, and a more faithful and useful. When you next drive out, you will see the silver blazing in the sun with increased brightness. And now you have the pleasant evening before you. Do not, like some slovenly men in remote places, sit down to dinner an unwashed and untidy object: living so quietly as you do, it is especially needful, if you would avoid an encroaching rudeness, to pay careful attention to the little refinements of life. And the great event of the day over, you have music, books, and children; you have the summer saunter in the twilight; you have the winter evening fireside; you take perhaps another turn at your sermon for an hour or two. The day has brought its work and its recreation; you can look back each evening upon something done; save when you give yourself a holiday which you feel has been fairly toiled for. And what a wonderful amount of work, such as it is, you may, by exertion regular but not excessive, turn off in the course of the ten months and a-half of the working year!

And thus, day by day, and month by month, the life of the country parson passes quietly away. It will be briefly comprehended on his tombstone, in the assurance that he did his duty, simply and faithfully, through so many years. It is somewhat monotonous: but he is too busy to weary of it: it is varied by not much society, in the sense of conversation with educated men with whom the clergyman has many common feelings. But it is inexpressibly pleasing when, either to his own house or to a dwelling near, there comes a visitor with whom an entire sympathy is felt, though probably holding very antagonistic views: then come the "good talks" which delighted Johnson; genial evenings, and long walks of afternoons. The daily post is a daily strong sensation, sometimes pleasing, sometimes painful, as he brings tidings of the outer world. You have your daily *Times*; each Monday morning brings your *Saturday Review*; and the *Illustrated London News* comes not merely for the children's sake. You read all the quarterlies, of course; you skim the monthlies; but it is with tenfold interest and pleasure that month by month you receive that magazine which is edited by a dear friend who sends it to you, and in which sometimes certain pages have the familiar look of a friend's face. You draw it wet from its big envelope: you cut its leaves with care: you enjoy the fragrance of its steam as it dries at the study fire: you glance at the shining backs of that long row of volumes into which the pleasant monthly visitants have accumulated: you think you will have another volume soon. Then there is a great delight in occasionally receiving a large bundle of books which have been ordered from your bookseller in the city a hundred miles off: in reading the address in such big letters that they must have been made with a brush: in stripping off

the successive layers of immensely thick brown paper : in reaching the precious hoard within, all such fresh copies (who are they that buy the copies you turn over in the shop, but which you would not on any account take ?) : such fresh copies, with their brand-new bindings, and their leaves so pure in a material sense : in cutting the leaves at the rate of two or three volumes an evening, and in seeing the entire accession of literature lying about the other table (not the one you write on) for a few days ere they are given to the shelves. You are not in the least ashamed to confess that you are pleased by all these little things. You regard it as not necessarily proving any special pettiness of mind or heart. You regard it as no proof of greatness in any man, that he should appear to care nothing for anything. Your private belief is that it shows him to be either a humbug or a fool.

In this little volume the indulgent reader will find certain of those Essays which the writer discovered on cutting the leaves of the magazine which comes to him on the last day of every month. They were written as something which might afford variety of work, which often proves the most restful of all recreation. They are nothing more than that which they are called—a country clergyman's *Recreations*. My solid work, and my first thoughts, are given to that which is the business and the happiness of my life. But these Essays have led me into a field which to myself was fresh and pleasant. And I have always returned from them, with increased interest, to graver themes and trains of thought. I have not forgot, as I wrote them, a certain time, when my little children must go away from their early home ; when these evergreens I have planted and these walks I have made shall pass to my successor (may he be a better man !) ;

and when I shall perhaps find my resting-place under those ancient oaks. Nor have I wholly failed to remember a coming day, when bishops and archbishops shall be called to render an account of the fashion in which they exercised their solemn and dignified trusts ; and when I, who am no more than the minister of a Scotch country parish, must answer for the diligence with which I served my little cure.

(1859.)

## II.

### CONCERNING THE ART OF PUTTING THINGS: BEING THOUGHTS ON REPRESENTATION AND MISREP- SENTATION.

LET the reader be assured that the word *Representation*, which has caught his eye on glancing at the title of this essay, has nothing earthly to do with the Elective Franchise, whether in boroughs or counties. Not a syllable will be found upon the following pages bearing directly or indirectly upon any New Reform Bill. I do not care a rush who is member for this county. I have no doubt that all members of Parliament are very much alike. Everybody knows that each individual legislator who pushes his way into the House is actuated solely by a pure patriotic love for his country. No briefless barrister ever got into Parliament in the hope of getting a place of twelve-hundred a year. No barrister in fair practice ever did so in the hope of getting a silk gown, or the Solicitor-Generalship, or a seat on the bench. No merchant or country-gentleman ever did so in the hope of gaining a little accession of dignity and influence in the town or county in which he lives. All these things are universally understood; and they are mentioned here merely to enable it to be said, that this treatise has nothing to do with them.

Edgar Allan Poe declared that he never had the least

difficulty in tracing the logical steps by which he chose any subject on which he had ever written, and matured his plan for treating it. And some readers may remember a curious essay, contained in his collected works, in which he gives a minute account of the genesis of his extraordinary poem, *The Raven*. I believe that most authors could tell us that very frequently the conception and the treatment of their subject have darted on them all at once, they could not tell how. Many clergymen know how strangely texts and topics of discourse have been suggested to them, while it was impossible to trace any link of association with what had occupied their minds the instant before. The late Douglas Jerrold relates how he first conceived the idea of one of his most popular productions. Walking on a winter day, he passed a large enclosure full of romping boys at play. He paused for a minute ; and as he looked and mused, a thought flashed upon him. It was not so beautiful, and you would say not so natural, as the reflections of Gray, as he looked from a distance at Eton College. As Jerrold gazed at the schoolboys, and listened to their merry shouts, there burst upon him the conception of *Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures* ! There seems little enough connection with what he was looking at ; and, although Jerrold declared that the sight suggested the idea, he could not pretend to trace the link of association. It would be very interesting if we could accurately know the process by which authors, small or great, piece together their grander characters. How did Milton pile up his Satan ? how did Shakespeare put together Hamlet or Lady Macbeth ? how did Charlotte Brontë imagine Rochester ? Writers generally keep their secrets, and do not let us see behind the scenes. We can trace, indeed, in successive pieces by Sheridan, the step-by-step development of his most brilliant jests,

and of his most gushing bursts of the feeling of the moment. No doubt Lord Brougham had tried the woolsack to see how it would do, before he fell on his knees before it (on the impulse of the instant) at the end of his great speech on the Reform Bill. But of course Lord Brougham would not tell us; and Sheridan did not intend us to know. Even Mr. Dickens, when, in his preface to the cheap edition of *Pickwick*, he avows his purpose of telling us all about the origin of that amazingly successful serial, gives us no inkling of the process by which he produced the character which we all know so well. He tells us a great deal about the mere details of the work: the pages of letter-press, the number of illustrations, the price and times of publication. But the process of actual authorship remains a mystery. The great painters would not tell where they got their colours. The effort which gives a new character to the acquaintance of hundreds of thousands of Englishmen, shall be concealed beneath a decorous veil. All that Mr. Dickens tells us is this: 'I thought of Mr. Pickwick and wrote the first number.' And to the natural question of curiosity, 'How on earth did you think of Mr. Pickwick?' the author's silence replies, 'I don't choose to tell you *that!*'

And now, courteous reader, you are humbly asked to suffer the writer's discursive fashion, as he records how the idea of the present discourse, treatise, dissertation, or essay flashed upon his mind. Yesterday was a most beautiful frosty day. The air was indescribably exhilarating: the cold was no more than bracing; and as I fared forth for a walk of some miles, I saw the tower of the ancient church, green with centuries of ivy, looking through the trees which surround it, the green ivy silvered over with hoar-frost. The hedges on either hand, powdered with rime, were shining in the cold sunshine of the winter afternoon.

First, I passed through a thick pine-wood, bordering the road on both sides. The stems of the fir-trees had that warm rich colour which is always pleasant to look at; and the green branches were just touched with frost. One undervalues the evergreens in summer: their colour is dull when compared with the fresher and brighter green of the deciduous trees; but now, when these gay transients have changed to shivering skeletons, the hearty firs, hollies, and yews warm and cheer the wintry landscape. Not the wintry, I should say, but the *winter* landscape, which conveys quite a different impression. The word *wintry* awakens associations of bleakness, bareness, and bitterness; a hearty evergreen tree never looks wintry, nor does a landscape to which such trees give the tone. Then emerging from the wood, I was in an open country. A great hill rises just ahead, which the road will skirt by-and-by: on the right, at the foot of a little cliff hard by, runs a shallow, broad, rapid river. Looking across the river, I can see a large range of nearly level park, which at a mile's distance rises into upland; the park shows broad green glades, broken and bounded by fine trees, in clumps and in avenues. In summertime you would see only the green leaves: but now, peering through the branches, you can make out the outline of the gray turrets of the baronial dwelling which has stood there—added to, taken from, patched, and altered, but still the same dwelling—for the last four hundred years. And on the left I am just passing the rustic gateway through which you approach that quaint cottage on the knoll two hundred yards off—one story high, with deep thatch, steep gables, overhanging eaves, and veranda of rough oak—a sweet little place, where Izaak Walton might successfully have carried out the spirit of his favourite text, and 'studied to be quiet.' All this way, three miles

and more, I did not meet a human being. There was not a breath of air through the spines of the firs, and not a sound except the ripple of the river. I leant upon the gate, and looked into a field. Something was grazing in the field, but I cannot remember whether it was cows, sheep, oxen, elephants, or camels; for as I was looking, and thinking how I should begin a sermon on a certain subject much thought upon for the last fortnight, my mind resolutely turned away from it, and said, as plainly as mind could express it, For several days to come I shall produce material upon no subject but one,—and *that* shall be the comprehensive, practical, suggestive, and most important subject of the ART OF PUTTING THINGS !

And, indeed, there is hardly a larger subject, in relation to the social life of the nineteenth century in England ; and there is hardly a practical problem to the solution of which so great an amount of ingenuity and industry, honest and dishonest, is daily brought, as the grand problem of setting forth yourself, your goods, your horses, your case, your plans, your thoughts and arguments—all your belongings, in short—to the best advantage. From the Prime Minister, who exerts all his wonderful skill and eloquence to put his policy before Parliament and the country in the most favourable light, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who does his very best to cast a rosy hue even upon an income-tax, down to the shopman who arranges his draperies in the window against market-day in that fashion which he thinks will prove most fascinating to the maid-servant with her newly-paid wages in her pocket, and the nurse who in a most lively and jovial manner assures a young lady of three years old that she will never feel the taste of her castor-oil,—yea, even to the dentist who with a joke and a smiling face approaches you with his forceps

in his hand :—from the great Attorney-General seeking to place his view of his case with convincing force before a bewildered jury (that view being flatly opposed to common-sense), down to the schoolboy found out in some mischievous trick and trying to throw the blame upon somebody else: almost all civilised beings in Great Britain are from morning to night labouring hard to put things in general or something in particular in the way that they think will lead to the result which best suits their views; are, in short, practising the art of representing or misrepresenting things for their own advantage. Great skill, you would say, must result from this constant practice: and indeed it probably does. But then people are so much in the habit of trying to *put things* themselves, that they are uncommonly sharp at seeing through the devices of others. ‘Set a thief to catch a thief,’ says the ancient adage: and so, set a man who can himself tell a very plausible story without saying anything positively untrue, to discover the real truth under the rainbow tints of the plausible story told by another.

But do not fancy, my kind reader, that I have any purpose of making a misanthropical onslaught upon poor humanity. I am very far from desiring to imply that there is anything essentially wrong or dishonest in trying to put things in the most favourable light for our views and plans. The contrary is the case. It is a noble gift, when a man is able to put great truths or momentous facts before our minds with that vividness and force which shall make us feel these facts and truths in their grand reality. A great evil, to which human beings are by their make subject, is, that they can talk of things, know things, and understand things, without *feeling* them in their true importance—without, in short, *realising* them. There appears to

be a certain numbness about the mental organs of perception ; and the man who is able to *put things* so strikingly, clearly, pithily, forcibly, glaringly, whether these things are religious, social, or political truths, as to get through that numbness, that crust of insensibility, to the *quick* of the mind and heart, must be a great man, an earnest man, an honest man, a good man. I believe that any great reformer will find less practical discouragement in the opposition of bad people than in the *inertia* of good people. You cannot get them to feel that the need and the danger are so imminent and urgent ; you cannot get them to bestir themselves with the activity and energy which the case demands. You cannot get them to take it in that the open sewer and the airless home of the working man are such a very serious matter ; you cannot get them to feel that the vast uneducated masses of the British population form a mine beneath our feet which may explode any day, with God knows what devastation. I think that not all the wonderful eloquence, freshness, and pith of Mr. Kingsley form a talent so valuable as his power of compelling people to *feel* what they had always known and talked about, but never felt. And wherein lies that power, but just in his skill to *put things*—in his power of truthful representation ?

Sydney Smith was once talking with an Irish Roman Catholic priest [about the proposal to endow the Romish Church in Ireland. ‘We would not take the Saxon money,’ said the worthy priest, quite sincerely ; ‘we would not defile our fingers with it. No matter whether Parliament offered us endowments or not, we would not receive them.’ ‘Suppose,’ replied Sydney Smith, ‘you were to receive an official letter that on calling at such a bank in the town three miles off, you would hereafter receive a hundred pounds

a-quarter, the first quarter's allowance payable in advance on the next day; and suppose that you wanted money to do good, or to buy books, or anything else, do you mean to say you would not drive over to the town and take the hundred pounds out of the bank?' The priest was staggered. He had never looked at the thing in that precise light. He had never had the vague distant question of endowment brought so home to him. He had been quite sincere in his spirited repudiation of Saxon coin, as recorded above; but he had not exactly understood what he was saying and doing. '*Oh, Mr. Smith,*' he replied, '*you have such a way of putting things!*' What a triumph of the Anglican's art of truthful representation!

One of the latest instances of skill in putting things, which I remember to have struck me, I came upon, where abundance of such skill may be found—in a leading article in the *Times*. The writer of that article was endeavouring to show that the work of the country clergy is extremely light. Of course he is sadly mistaken; but this by the way. As to sermons, said the lively writer (I don't pretend to give his exact words), what work is there in a sermon? Just fancy that you are writing half-a-dozen letters of four pages each, and crossed! The thing was cleverly put; and it really came on me with the force of a fact, a new and surprising fact. Many sermons has this thin right hand written; but my impression of a sermon, drawn from some years' experience, is of a composition very different from a letter—something demanding that brain and heart should be worked to the top of their bent for more hours than need be mentioned here; something implying as hard and as exhausting labour as man can well go through. Surely, I thought, I have been working under a sad delusion! Only half-a-dozen light letters of gossip to a friend: *that* is the

amount of work implied in a sermon ! Have I been all these years making a bugbear of such a simple and easy matter as *that* ? Here is a new and cheerful way of putting the thing ! But unhappily, though the clever representation would no doubt convey to some thousands of readers the impression that to write a sermon was a very simple affair after all, it broke down, it crumpled up, it went to pieces when brought to the test of fact. When next morning I had written my text, I thought to myself, Now here I have just to do the same amount of work which it would cost me to write half-a-dozen letters to half-a-dozen friends, giving them our little news. Ah, it would not do ! In a little, I was again in the struggle of mapping out my subject, and cutting a straight track through the jungle of the world of mind ; looking about for illustrations, seeking words to put my meaning with clearness and interest before the simple country-folk I preach to. It was not the least like letter-writing. The clever writer's way of putting things was wrong ; and though I acquit him of any crime beyond speaking with authority of a thing which he knew nothing about, I must declare that his representation was a misrepresentation. If you have sufficient skill, you may put what is painful so that it shall sound pleasant ; you may put a wearisome journey by railway in such a connection with cosy cushions, warm rugs, a review or a new book, storm sweeping the fields without, and warmth and ease within, that it shall seem a delightful thing. You may put work, in short, so that it shall look like play. But actual experiment breaks down the representation. You cannot change the essential nature of things. You cannot make black white, though a clever man may make it seem so.

Still, we all have a great love for trying to put any hard work or any painful business, which it is certain

we must go through, in such a light as may make it seem less terrible. And it is not difficult to deceive ourselves when we are eager to be deceived. No one can tell how much comfort poor Damien drew from the way in which he put the case on the morning of his death by horrible tortures: 'The day will be long,' he said, 'but it will have an end.' No one can tell what a gleam of light may have darted upon the mind of Charles I. as he knelt to the block, when Bishop Juxon put encouragingly the last trial the monarch had to go through: 'One last stage, somewhat turbulent and troublesome, *but still a very short one.*' No one can tell how much it soothed the self-love of Tom Purdie, when Sir Walter Scott ordered him to cut down some trees which Tom wished to stand, and positively commanded that they should go down in spite of all Tom's arguments and expostulations, and all this in the presence of a number of gentlemen before whom Tom could not bear any impeachment of his woodcraft; no one, I say, can tell how much it soothed the worthy forester's self-love when after half-an-hour's sulky meditation he thought of the happy plan of putting the thing on another footing than that of obedience to an order, and looking up cheerfully again, said, 'As for those trees, I think I'll *tak' your advice*, Sir Walter!' Would it be possible, I wonder, thus pleasantly to *put* the writing of an article so as to do away the sense of the exertion which writing an article implies? Have we not all little tricks which we play upon ourselves, to make our labour seem lighter, our dignity greater, our whole position jollier, than in our secret soul we know is the fact! Think, then, thou jaded man, bending over the written page which is one day to attain the dignity of print in *Fraser* or *Blackwood*, how in these words thou art addressing many thousands of thy

enlightened countrymen and thy fair countrywomen, and becoming known (as Fielding puts it in one of his simply felicitous sentences) 'to numbers who otherwise never saw or knew thee, and whom thou shalt never see or know.' Think how thou shalt lie upon massive library-tables, in substantially elegant libraries, side by side, perhaps, with Helps, Kingsley, or Hazlitt: how thou shalt lighten the cares of middle-aged men. Alas! all that way of putting things is mere poetry. It won't do. It still remains, and always must remain, the stretch and strain of mind and muscle, to write. Let not the critic be

severe on people who write ill: they deserve much credit and sympathy because they write at all. But though these grand and romantic ways of putting the writing of one's article will not serve, there are little prosaic material expedients which really avail to put it in a light in which it looks decidedly less laborious. Slowly let the large drawer be pulled out wherein lies the paper which will serve, if we are allowed to see them, for many months to come. There lies the large blue quarto, so thick and substantial; there the massive foolscap, so soft and smooth, over which the pen so pleasantly and unscratchingly glides; that is the raw material for the article. Draw it forth deliberately: fold it accurately: then the ivory stridently cuts it through. Weigh the paper in your hand; then put the case thus: 'Well, it is only covering these pages with writing after all; it is just putting three and twenty lines, of so many words each on the average, upon each of these unblotted surfaces.' Surely there is not so much in that. Do not think of all the innumerable processes of mind that go to it; of the weighing, of the consequences of general propositions; of the choice of words; of the pioneering your track right on, not turning to

either hand ; of the memory taxed to bring up old thoughts upon your subject ; of the clock striking unheard while you are bent upon your task, so much harder than carrying any reasonable quantity of coals, or blacking ever so many boots, or currying ever so many horses. Just stick to this view of the matter, just put the thing this way—that all you have to do is to blacken so many pages, and take the comfort of that way of putting it.

To such people as we human beings are, there is hardly any matter of greater practical importance than what we have called the Art of Putting Things. For, to us, things *are* what they *seem*. They affect us just according to what we think them. Our knowledge of things, and our feeling in regard to things, are all contingent on the way in which these things have been put before us ; and what different ways there are of putting every possible doctrine, or opinion, or doing, or thing, or event ! And what mischievous results, colouring all our views and feelings, may follow from an important subject having been wrongly, disagreeably, injudiciously put to us when we were children ! How many men hate Sunday all their lives because it was put to them so gloomily in their boyhood ; and how many Englishmen, on the other hand, fancy a Scotch Sunday the most disagreeable of days because the case has been wrongly put to them, while in truth there is, in intelligent, religious Scotch families, no more pleasant, cheerful, genial, restful, happy day. And did not Byron always hate Horace, put to him in youth with the associations of impositions and the birch ? There is no more sunshiny inmate of any home than the happy-tempered one who has the art of putting all things in a pleasant light, from the great misfortunes of life down to a broken carriage-spring, a servant's

failings, a child's salts and senna. You are extremely indignant at some person who has used you ill ; you are worried and annoyed at his misconduct ; it is as though you were going about with a mustard blister applied to your mind : when a word or two from some genial friend puts the entire matter in a new light, and your irritation goes, the blister is removed, your anger dies out, you would like to pat the offending being on the head, and say you bear him no malice. And it is wonderful what a little thing sometimes suffices to put a case thus differently. When you are complaining of somebody's ill-usage, it will change your feeling and the look of things, if the friend you are speaking to does no more than say of the peccant brother, ' Ah ! poor fellow ! ' I think that every man or woman who has got servants, and who has pretty frequently to observe (I mean to see, not to speak of) some fault on their part, owes a deep debt of gratitude to the man, whoever he was, who thus kindly and wisely gave us a forbearing standpoint from which to regard a servant's failings, by putting the thing in this way, true in itself though new to many, that you cannot expect perfection for fourteen, or even for fifty pounds a year. Has not that way of putting things sometimes checked you when you meditated a sharp reproof, and allayed anger which otherwise would have been pretty hot ? Even when a rogue cheats you (though that, I confess, is a peculiarly irritating thing), is not your wrath mollified by putting the thing thus : that the poor wretch probably needed very much the money out of which he cheated you, and would not have cheated you if he could have got it honestly ? When a horse-dealer sells you, at a remarkably stiff figure, a broken-winded steed, do not yield to unqualified indignation. True, the horse-dealer is always ready to cheat, but feel for the poor

fellow, every man thinks it right to cheat *him* ; and with every man's hand against him, what wonder that his hand should be against every man ? Everything, you see, turns on the way in which you put things. And it is so from earliest youth to latest age. The old scholar, whose delight is to sit among his books, thus puts his library :—

‘ My days among the dead are pass'd :  
    Around me I behold,  
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,  
    The mighty minds of old :  
My never-failing friends are they,  
    With whom I converse night and day.’ \*

You see the library was not mere shelves of books, and the books were not mere printed pages. You remember how Robinson Crusoe, in his cheerful moods, put his island home. He sat down to his lonely meal, but *that* was not how he put things. No. ‘ Here was my majesty, all alone by myself, attended by my servants : ’ his servants being the dog, parrot, and cat. I remember how a wealthy merchant, a man quite of the city as opposed to the country, once talked of emigrating to America, and buying an immense tract of land, where he and his family should lead a simple, unartificial, innocent life. He was not in the least cut out for such a life, and would have been miserable in it, but he was fascinated with the notion because he put it thus :—‘ I shall have great flocks and herds, and live in a tent like *Abraham*. ’ And *that* way of putting things brought up before the busy man of the nineteenth century I know not what sweet picture of a primevally quiet and happy life. I can remember yet how, when I crept about my father's study, a little boy of three years old, I felt the magic of the art of putting things. All children are restless. It is

\* Southey.

impossible for them to remain still, and we all know how a child in a study worries the busy scholar. All admonitions to keep quiet failed ; it was really impossible to obey them. Creep, creep about ; upset footstools ; pull off table-covers ; upset ink. But when the thing was put in a different way ; when the kind voice said, ‘ Now you’ll be my little dog : creep into your house there under the table, and lie quite still,’ there was no difficulty in obeying *that* command : and, except an occasional bow-wow, there was perfect stillness. The art of putting things had prevailed. It was necessary to keep still ; for a dog in a study, I know, must keep still, and I was a dog.

It must be a worrying thing for a great warrior or statesman, fighting a great battle, or introducing a great legislative measure, to remember that the estimation in which he is to be held in his own day and country, and in other countries and ages, depends not at all on what his conduct is in itself, but entirely on the way in which it shall be put before mankind—represented, or misrepresented, in newspapers, in rumours, in histories. How very unlikely it is that history will ever put the case on its real merits ; the characters of history will either be praised far above their deserts, or abused far beyond their sins. ‘ Do not read history to me,’ said Sir Robert Walpole, ‘ for *that*, I know must be false.’ History could be no more than the record of the way in which men had agreed to put things ; and those behind the scenes, the men who pull the wires which move the puppets, must often have reason to smile at the absurd mistakes into which the history-writing outsiders fall. And even apart from ignorance, or bias, or intention to deceive, what a fearful thought it must be to a great man taking a conspicuous part in some great solemnity, such as the trial of a queen, or the impeachment

of a governor-general, to reflect that this great solemnity, and his own share in it, and how he looked, and what he said, may possibly be put before mankind by the great historian, Mr. Wordy ! One can enter into Johnson's feeling when, on hearing that Boswell intended to write his biography, he exclaimed, in mingled terror and fury—‘ If I thought he contemplated writing my life, I should render *that* impossible by taking his ! ’ It was something to shudder at, the idea of going down to posterity as represented by a Boswell ! But the great lexicographer was mistaken : the Dutch-painter-like biography showed him exactly as he was, the great, little, mighty, weak, manly, babyish mind and heart. And not great men alone, historical personages, have this reason for disquiet and apprehension. Don't you know, my reader, not unversed in the ways of life, that it depends entirely on how the story is told, how the thing is represented or misrepresented, whether your conduct on any given occasion shall appear heroic or ridiculous, reasonable or absurd, natural or affected, modest or impudent : and don't you know, too, what a vast number of ill-set people are always ready to give the story the unfavourable turn, to put the matter in the bad light ; and how many more, not really ill-set, not really with any malicious intention, are prompted by their love of fun, in relating any act of any acquaintance, to try to set it in a ridiculous light ? Your domestic establishment is shabby or unpretending, elegant or tawdry, just as the fancy of the moment may lead your neighbour to put the thing. Your equipage is a neat little turn-out or a shabby attempt, your house is quiet or dull, yourself a genius or a blockhead, just as it may strike your friend on the instant to put the thing. And don't we all know some people—not bad people in the main—who never by any chance put the thing except in the un-

favourable way? I have heard the self-same house called a snug little place and a miserable little hole; the same man called a lively talker and an absurd rattlebrain; the same person called a gentlemanlike man and a missy piece of affectation; the same income called competence and starvation; the same horse called a noble animal and an old white cow:—the entire difference, of course, lay in the fashion in which the narrator chose, from inherent *bonhomie* or inherent verjuice, to put the thing. While Mr. Bright probably regards it as the most ennobling occupation of humanity to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market, Byron said, as implying the lowest degree of degradation—

‘ Trust not for freedom to the Franks—  
They have a king *who buys and sells!* ’

And it is just the two opposite ways of putting the same admitted fact, to say that Britain is the first mercantile community of the world, and to say that we are a nation of shopkeepers. One way of putting the fact is the dignified, the other is the degrading. If a boy plays truant or falls asleep in church, it just depends on how you put it, or how the story is told, whether you are to see in all this the natural thoughtlessness of boyhood, or a first step towards the gallows. ‘ Billy Brown stole some of my apples,’ says a kind-hearted man; ‘ well, poor fellow, I daresay he seldom gets any.’ ‘ Billy Brown stole my apples,’ says the severe man; ‘ ah, the vagabond, he is born to be hanged.’ Sydney Smith put Catholic Emancipation as common justice and common sense; Dr. M’Neile puts it as a great national sin, and the origin of the potato disease. John Foster mentions in his *Diary*, that he once expostulated with a great hulking, stupid bumpkin, as to some gross transgression of which he

had been guilty. Little effect was produced on the bumpkin, for dense stupidity is a great duller of the conscience. Foster persisted: 'Do not you think,' he said, 'that the Almighty will be angry at such conduct as yours?' Blockhead as the fellow was, he could take in the idea of my essay; he replied, 'That's just as A tak's ut!' But what struck little Paul Dombey as strange, that the same bells rung for weddings and for funerals, and that the same sound was merry or doleful just as we put it, is true of many things besides bells. The character of everything we hear or see is reflected upon it from our own minds. The sun *sees* the earth look bright because it first *made* it so. You go to a public meeting, my friend. You make a speech. You get on, you think, uncommonly well. When your auditor Mr. A. or Miss B. goes home, and is asked there what sort of appearance you made, don't you fancy that the reply will be affected in any appreciable degree by the actual fact! It depends entirely on the state of the relator's nerves or digestion, or the passing fancy of the moment, whether you shall be said to have done delightfully or disgustingly; whether you shall be said to have made a brilliant figure, or to have made a fool of yourself. You never can be sure, though you spoke with the tongue of angels, but that ill-nature, peevishness, prejudice, thoughtlessness, may put the case that your speech was most abominable. Do you fancy that you could ever say or do anything that Mr. Snarling could not find fault with, or Miss Limejuice could not misrepresent?

Years ago, I was accustomed to frequent the courts of law, and to listen with much interest to the great advocates of that time, as Follett, Wilde, Thesiger, Kelly. Nowhere in the world, I think, is one so deeply impressed with the value of tact and skill in

putting things, as in the Court of Queen's Bench at the trial of an important case by a jury. Does not all the enormous difference, as great as that between a country bumpkin and a hog, between Follett and Mr. Briefless, lie simply in their respective powers of putting things? The actual facts, the actual merits of the case, have very little indeed to do with the verdict, compared with the counsel's skill in putting them; the artful marshalling of circumstances, the casting weak points into shadow, and bringing out strong points into glaring relief. I remember how I used to look with admiration at one of these great men, when, in his speech to the jury, he was approaching some circumstance in the case which made dead against him. It was beautiful to see the intellectual gladiator cautiously approaching the hostile fact; coming up to it, tossing and turning it about, and finally showing that it made strongly in his favour. Now, if that was really so, why did it look as if it made against him? Why should so much depend on the way in which he put it? Or, if the fact was in truth one that made against him, why should it be possible for a man to put it so that it should seem to make in his favour, and all without any direct falsification of facts or arguments, without any of that mere vulgar misrepresentation which can be met by direct contradiction? Surely it is not a desirable state of matters, that a plausible fellow should be able to explain away some very doubtful conduct of his own, and by skilful putting of things should be able to make it seem even to the least discerning that he is the most innocent and injured of human beings. And it is provoking, too, when you feel at once that his defence is a mere intellectual juggle, and yet, with all your logic, when you cannot just on the instant tear it to pieces, and put the thing in the light of truth.

Indeed, so well is it understood that by tact and address you may so put things as to make the worse appear the better reason, that the idea generally conveyed, when we talk of putting things, is, that there is something wrong, something to be adroitly concealed, some weak point in regard to which dust is to be thrown into too observant eyes. There is a common impression, not one of unqualified truth, that when all is above board, there is less need for skilful putting of the case. Many people think, though the case is by no means so, that truth may always be depended on to tell its own story and produce its due impression. Not a bit of it. However good my case might be, I should be sorry to intrust it to Mr. Numskull, with Sir Fitzroy Kelly on the other side.

It is a coarse and stupid expedient to have recourse to anything like falsification in putting things as they would make best for yourself, reader. And there is no need for it. Unless you have absolutely killed a man and taken his watch, or done something equally decided, you can easily represent circumstances so as to throw a favourable light upon yourself and your conduct. It is a mistake to fancy that in this world a story must be either true or false, a deed either right or wrong, a man either good or bad. There are few questions which can be answered by Yes or No. Almost all actions and events are of mingled character; and there is something to be said on both sides of almost every subject which can be debated. Who does not remember how, when he was a boy, and had done some mischief which he was too honest to deny, he revolved all he had done over and over, putting it in many lights, trying it in all possible points of view, till he had persuaded himself that he had done quite right, or at least that he had done nothing that was so very wrong, after all? There

was a lurking feeling, probably, that all this was self-deception ; and oh ! how our way of putting the case, so favourably to ourselves, vanished into air when our teacher and governor sternly called us to account ! All those jesuitical artifices were forgotten, and we just felt that we had done wrong, and there was no use trying to justify it.

The noble use of the power of putting things, is when a man employs that power to give tenfold force to truth. When you go and hear a great preacher, you sometimes come away wishing heartily that the impression he made on you would last: for you feel that though what struck you so much was not the familiar doctrine which you knew quite well before, but the way in which he put it, still that startling view of things was the right view. Probably in the pulpit more than anywhere else, we feel the difference between a man who talks about and about things, and another man who puts them so that we *feel* them. And when one thinks of all the ignorance, want, and misery which surround us in the wretched dwellings of the poor, which we know all about but take so coolly, it is sad to remember that truth does not make itself felt as it really is, but depends so sadly for the practical effect upon the skill with which it is put—upon the tact, graphic power, and earnest purpose of the man who tells it. A landed proprietor will pass a wretched row of cottages on his estate daily for years, yet never think of making an effort to improve them: who, when the thing is fairly put to him, will forthwith bestir himself to have things brought into a better state. He will wonder how he could have allowed matters to go on in that unhappy style so long ; but will tell you truly, that though the thing was before his eyes, he really never before thought of it in that light.

Some people have a happy knack for putting in a pleasant way everything that concerns themselves. Mr. A.'s son gets a poor place as a bank clerk ; his father goes about saying that the lad has found a fine opening in business. The young man is ordained, and gets a curacy on Salisbury Plain ; his father rejoices that there, never seeing a human face, he has abundant leisure for study, and for improving his mind. Or, the curacy is in the most crowded part of Manchester or Bethnal Green ; the father now rejoices that his son has opportunities of acquiring clerical experience, and of visiting the homes of the poor. Such a man's house is in a well-wooded country ; the situation is delightfully sheltered. He removes to a bare district without a tree,—ah ! there he has beautiful pure air and extensive views. It is well for human beings when they have the pleasant art of thus putting things ; for many, we all know, have the art of putting things in just the opposite way. They look at all things through jaundiced eyes ; and as things appear to themselves, so they put them to others. You remember, reader, how once upon a time David Hume the historian kindly sent Rousseau a present of a dish of beef-steaks. Rousseau fired at this ; he discerned in it a deep-laid insult ; he *put it* that Hume, by sending the steaks, meant to insinuate that he, Rousseau, could not afford to buy proper food for himself. Ah, I have known various Rousseaus ! They had not the genius, indeed, but they had all the wrong-headedness.

Who does not know the contrasted views of mankind and of life that pervade all the writings of Dickens and of Thackeray ? It is the same world that lies before both, but how differently they put it ! And look at the accounts in the Blue and Yellow newspapers respectively, of the borough member's speech to his constituents last night in the Corn Ex-

change. Judge by the account in the one paper, and he is a Burke for eloquence, a Peel for tact, a Shippen for incorruptible integrity. Judge by the account in the other, and you would wonder where the electors caught a mortal who combines so remarkably ignorance, stupidity, carelessness, inefficiency, and dishonesty. As for the speech, one journal declares it was fluent, the other that it was stuttering ; one that it was frank, the other that it was trimming ; one that it was sense, the other that it was nonsense. Nor need it be supposed that either journal intends deliberate falsehood. Each believes his own way of putting the case to be the right way ; and the truth, in most instances, doubtless lies midway between. But in fact, till the end of time, there will be at least two ways of putting everything. Perhaps the M.P. warmed with his subject, and threw himself heart and soul into his speech. Shall we say that he spoke with eloquent energy, or shall we put it that he bellowed like a bull ? Was he quiet and correct ? Then we may choose between saying that he is a classical speaker, and that he was as stiff as a poker. He made some jokes, perhaps : take your choice whether you shall call him clever or flippant, a wit or a buffoon. And so of everybody else. You know a clever, well-read young woman ; you may either call her so, or sneer at blue-stockings. You meet a lively, merry girl, who laughs and talks with all the frankness of innocence. You would say of her, my kindly reader, something like what I have just said ; but crabbed Mrs. Backbite will have it that she is a romp, a hoyden, of unformed manners. Perhaps Mrs. Backbite adds, shaking her head, she trusts, she really hopes, there is no harm in the girl ; but certainly no daughter of hers should be allowed to associate with her. And not merely does the way, favourable or unfavourable, in

which the thing shall be put, depend mainly on the temperament of the person who puts it, so that you shall know beforehand that Mr. Snarling will always give the unfavourable view, and Mr. Jollikin the favourable; but a further element of disturbance is introduced by the fact, that often the narrator's mood is such, that it is a toss-up, five minutes before he begins to tell his story, whether he shall put the conduct of his hero as good or bad.

Who needs the art of putting things more than the painter of portraits? Who sees so much of the littleness, the petty vanity, the silliness of mankind? It must be hard for such a man to retain much respect for human nature. The lurking belief in the mind of every man that he is remarkably good-looking, concealed in daily intercourse with his fellows, breaks out in the painter's studio. And without positive falsification, how cleverly the artist often contrives to put the features and figure of his sitter in a satisfactory fashion! Have not you seen the portrait of a plain, and even a very ugly person, which was strikingly like, and still very pleasant-looking and almost pretty? Have not you seen things so skilfully put, that the little snob looked dignified, the vulgar boor gentlemanlike, the plain-featured woman angelic—and all the while the likeness was accurately preserved?

It seems to me that in the case of many of those fine things which stir the heart and bring moisture to the eye, it depends entirely on the way in which they are put, whether they shall strike us as pathetic or silly, as sublime or ridiculous. The venerable aspect of the dethroned monarch, led in the triumphal procession of the Roman emperor, and looking indifferently on the scene, as he repeated often the words of Solomon, 'Vanity, vanity, all is vanity!'

depends much for the effect it always produces on the reader upon the stately yet touching fashion in which Gibbon tells the story. So with Hazlitt's often-recurring account of Poussin's celebrated picture, the *Et in Arcadiâ Ego*. As for Burke flinging the dagger upon the floor of the House of Commons, and Brougham falling on his knees in the House of Peers, what a ridiculous representation *Punch* could give of such things! What shall be said of Addison, often tipsy in life, yet passing away with the words addressed to his regardless stepson, 'See in what peace a Christian can die!' We need not think of things which are essentially ridiculous, though their perpetrators intended them to be sublime: as Lord Ellenborough's proclamation about the Gates of Somnauth, Sir William Codrington's despatch as to the blowing-up of Sebastopol, and all the grand passages in the writings of Mr. Wordy. Let me confess that I think it a very unhealthy sign of the times, this love which now exists of putting grave matters in a ridiculous light, which produces *Comic Histories of England*, *Comic Blackstones*, *Comic Parliamentary Debates*, *Comic Latin Grammars*, and the like. Dreary indeed must be the fun of such books; but that is not the worst of them. Yet one cannot seriously object to such a facetious serial as *Punch*, which represents the funny element in our sad insular character. Punch lives by the art of putting things, and putting them in a single way; but how wonderfully well, how successfully, how genially, he puts all things funnily! But to burlesque *Macbeth* or *Othello*, to travesty Virgil, to parody the soliloquy in *Hamlet*, though it may be putting things in a novel and amusing way, approaches to the nature of sacrilege. Sometimes, indeed, the ludicrous way of putting things has served an admirable purpose; as in the imitations of Southey's

Sapphics and Kotzebue's morality in the *Poetry of the Anti-jacobin*. And the ludicrous way of putting things has sometimes brought them much more vividly home to "men's business and bosoms," as in Sydney Smith's description of the possible results of a French invasion. Nor has it failed to answer the end of most cogent argument, as in his description of Mrs. Partington sweeping back the Atlantic Ocean.

Do not fancy, my friend, that you can by possibility so live that ill-natured folk will not be able to put everything you do unfavourably. The old man with the ass was a martyr to the desire so to act that there should be no possibility of putting what he did as wrong. And when John Gilpin's wife, for fear the neighbours should think her proud, caused the chaise to draw up five doors off, rely upon it some of the neighbours would say she did so in the design of making her carriage the more conspicuous. When you give a dinner-party, and after your guests are gone, sit down and review the progress of the entertainment, thinking how nicely everything went on, do you remember, madam, that at that same moment your guests are seated at their own homes, putting all the circumstances in quite a different way: laughing at your hired greengrocer, who (you are just saying) looked so like a butler; execrating your champagne, which (you are this moment flattering yourself) passed for the product of the grape and not of the gooseberry; and generally putting yourself, your children, your house, your dinner, your company, your music, into such ridiculous lights, that, if you knew it (which happily you never will), you would wish that you had mingled a little strychnine with the vintage so vilified. Still, it is pleasant to believe that there is no real malice in the way in which most people cut up their friends behind their backs. You really have a very

kindly feeling towards Mr. A. or Mrs. B., though you do turn them into ridicule in their absence. After laughing at Mr. A. to Mrs. B., you are quite ready to laugh at Mrs. B. to Mr. A. The truth appears to be, that all this is an instance of that reaction which is necessary to human beings. In people's presence politeness requires that you should put everything that concerns them in the most agreeable and favourable way. Impatient of this constraint, you revenge yourself upon it whenever circumstances permit, by puttings things in the opposite fashion. I feel not the least enmity towards Mr. Snooks for saying behind my back that my essays are rather trash. He has frequently said in my presence that they are far superior to anything ever written by Macaulay, Milton, or Shakespeare. I knew that after my dear friend's civility had been subjected to so violent a strain as was implied in his making the latter declaration, it would of necessity fly back, like a released bow, whenever he left me; and that the first mutual acquaintance he met would have the satisfaction of hearing the case put in a very different way. And no doubt, if my dear friend were put upon his oath, his true opinion of me would transpire as nearly midway between the two ways of putting it respectively before my face and behind my back.

You are a country clergyman, let us say, my reader, with a small parish; and while you do your duty faithfully and zealously, you spend a spare hour now and then upon a review or a magazine article. You like the thought that thus, from your remote solitude, you are addressing a larger audience than that which you address Sunday by Sunday. You think that reasonable and candid people would say that this is an improving and pleasant way of employing a little leisure time, instead of rusting into stupidity or moon-

ing about blankly, or smoking yourself into vacancy, or reading novels, or listening to and retailing gossip, or hanging about the streets of the neighbouring county town, or growing sarcastic and misanthropic. But don't you remember, my dear friend, that although *you* put the case in this way, it is highly probable that some of your acquaintances, whose proffered contributions to the periodical with which you are supposed to be connected have been 'declined with thanks,' and whom malignant editors exclude from the opportunity of enlightening an ungrateful world, may put the matter very differently indeed ? True, you are always thoroughly prepared with your sermon on Sundays, you are assiduous in your care of the sick and the aged, you have cottage lectures here and there throughout the parish, you teach classes of children and young people, you know familiarly the face and the circumstances of every soul of your population, and you honestly give your heart and strength to your sacred calling, suffering nothing whatever to interfere with *that* : but do you fancy that all this diligence will prevent some people from exclaiming, 'Ah, see Mr. Smith ; isn't it dreadful ? See how he neglects his proper work, and spends his time, his *whole* time, in writing articles for the *Quarterly Review* ! It's disgraceful ! The bishop, if he did his duty, would pull him up !'

A striking instance of the effect of skilfully putting things may be found in the diary of Warren Hastings. The great Governor-General always insisted that his conduct of Indian affairs had been just and beneficent, and that the charges brought by Burke and Sheridan were without foundation in truth. He declared that he had that conviction in the centre of his being ; that he was as sure of it as of his own existence. But as he listened to the opening speech of Burke he tells us

he saw things in a new light. He felt the spell of the way in which the great orator put things. Could this really be the right way? 'For half-an-hour,' says Hastings, 'I looked up at Burke in a reverie of wonder, and during that time I actually felt myself the most guilty being upon earth!' But Hastings adds that he did what the boy who has played truant does—he took refuge in his own way of putting things. 'I recurred to my own heart, and there found what sustained me under all this accusation.'

A young lad's choice of a profession depends mainly upon the way in which the life of that profession is put before him. If a boy is to go to the bar, it will be expedient to make the Chancellorship the prominent feature in the picture presented to him. It will be better to keep in the background the lonely evenings in the chambers at the Temple, the weary back-benches in court, the heart-sickening waiting year after year. And the first impression, strongly rooted, will probably last. I love my own profession. I would exchange its life and its work for no other position on earth; but I feel that I owe part of its fascination to the fragrance of boyish fancies of it which linger yet. Blessed be the kind and judicious parent or preceptor, whose skilful putting of things long ago has given to our vocation, whatever it may be, a charm which can overcome the disgust which might otherwise come of the hard realities, the little daily worries, the discouragements and frustrated hopes! How much depends on first impressions—on the way in which a man, a place, a book is put to us for the first time! Something of cheerlessness and dreariness will always linger about even the summer aspect of the house which you first approached when the winter afternoon was closing in, dark, gusty, cold, miserable-looking. What a difference it makes to the

little man who is to have a tooth pulled out, whether the dentist approaches with a grievous look, in silence, with the big forceps conspicuous in his hand ; or comes up cheerfully, with no display of steel, and says, with a smiling face, ‘ Come, my little friend, it will be over in a moment ; you will hardly have time to feel it ; you will stand it like a brick, and mamma will be proud of having such a brave little boy ! ’ or, if either man or boy has a long task to go through, how much more easily it will be done if it is put in separate divisions than if it is set before one all in a mass ! *Divide et impera* states a grand principle in the art of putting things. If your servant is to clear away a mass of snow, he will do it in half the time and with twice the pleasure if you first mark it out into squares, to be cleared away one after the other. By the make of our being we like to have many starts and many arrivals : it does not do to look too far on without a break. I remember the driver of a mail-coach telling me, as I sat on the box through a sixty-mile drive, that it would weary him to death to drive that road daily if it were as straight as a railway : he liked the turnings and windings, which put the distance in the form of successive bits. It was sound philosophy in Sydney Smith to advise us, whether physically or morally, to ‘ take short views.’ It would knock you up at once if, when the railway carriage moved out of the station at Edinburgh, you began to trace in your mind’s eye the whole route to London. Never do that. Think first of Dunbar, then of Newcastle, then of York, and, putting the thing thus, you will get over the distance without fatigue of mind. What little child would have heart to begin the alphabet, if, before he did so, you put clearly before him all the school and college work of which it is the beginning ? The poor little thing would knock up at once, wearied

out by your want of skill in putting things. And so it is that Providence, kindly and gradually putting things, wiles us onward, still keeping hope and heart, through the trials and cares of life. Ah, if we had had it put to us at the outset how much we should have to go through, to reach even our present stage in life, we should have been ready to think it the best plan to sit down and die at once! But, in compassion for human weakness, the Great Director and Shower of events practises the Art of Putting Things. Might not we sometimes do so when we do not? When we see some poor fellow grumbling at his lot, and shirking his duty, might not a little skill employed in putting these things in a proper light serve better than merely expressing our contempt or indignation? A single sentence might make him see that what he was complaining of was reasonable and right. It is quite wonderful from what odd and perverse points of view people will look at things: and then things look so very different. The hill behind your house, which you have seen a thousand times, you would not know if you approached it from some unwonted quarter. Now, if you see a man afflicted with a perverse twist of mind, making him put things in general or something in particular in a wrong way, you do him a much kinder turn in directing him how to put things rightly, than if you were a skilful surgeon and cured him of the most fearful squint that ever hid behind blue spectacles.

Did not Franklin go to hear Whitefield preach a charity sermon resolved not to give a penny; and was he not so thoroughly overcome by the great preacher's way of putting the claims of the charity which he was advocating, that he ended by emptying his pockets into the plate? I daresay Alexander the Great was somewhat staggered in his plans of conquest by Par-

menio's way of putting things. 'After you have conquered Persia, what will you do?' 'Then I shall conquer India.' 'After you have conquered India, what will you do?' 'Conquer Scythia.' 'And after you have conquered Scythia, what will you do?' 'Sit down and rest.' 'Well,' said Parmenio to the conqueror, 'why not sit down and rest now?' I trust young Sheridan was proof against his father's way of putting things, when the young man said he meant to go down a coal-pit. 'Why go down a coal-pit?' said Sheridan the elder. 'Merely to be able to say I have been there.' 'You blockhead,' replied the high-principled sire, 'what is there to keep you from saying so without going?'

I remember witnessing a decided success of the art of putting things. A vulgar rich man who had recently bought an estate in Aberdeenshire, exclaimed, 'It is monstrous hard! I have just had this morning to pay forty pounds of stipend to the parish minister for my property. Now I never enter the parish church' (nor any other, he might have added), 'and why should I pay to maintain a church to which I don't belong?' I omit the oaths which served as sauce. Now, that was Mr. Oddbody's way of putting things, and you would say his case was a hard one. But a quiet man who was present changed the aspect of matters. 'Is it not true, Mr. Oddbody,' he said, 'that when you bought your estate its rental was reckoned after deducting the payment you mention; that the exact value of your annual payment to the minister was calculated, and the amount deducted from the price you paid for the property? And is it not therefore true, that not a penny of that forty pounds really comes out of your pocket?' Mr. Oddbody's face elongated. The bystanders unequivocally signified what they thought of him: and as long as he

lived he never failed to be remembered as the man who had tried to extort sympathy by false pretences.

To no man is tact in putting things more essential than to the clergyman. An injudicious and unskilful preacher may so put the doctrines which he sets forth as to make them appear revolting and absurd. It is a fearful thing to hear a stupid fellow preaching upon the doctrine of Election. He may so put that doctrine that he shall fill every clever young lad who hears him with prejudices against Christianity, which may last through life. And in advising one's parishioners, especially in administering reproof where needful, let the parish priest, if he would do good, call into play all his tact. With the best intentions, through lack of skill in putting things, he may do great mischief. Let the calomel be concealed beneath the jelly. Not that I counsel sneakiness ; *that* is worse than the most indiscreet honesty. There is no need to put things, like the dean immortalised by Pope, who when preaching in the Chapel Royal, said to his hearers that unless they led religious lives they would ultimately reach a place 'which he would not mention in so polite an assembly.' Nor will it be expedient to put things like the contemptible wretch who, preaching before Louis XIV., said, *Nous mourrons tous* ; then, turning to the king, and bowing humbly, *presque tous*. And it is only in addressing quite exceptional congregations that it would now-a-days be regarded as a piece of proper respect for the mighty of the earth, were the preacher, in stating that all who heard him were sinners, to add, by way of reservation, all who have less than a thousand a-year.

Any man who approaches the matter with a candid spirit, must be much struck by the difference between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic ways of putting the points at issue between the two great Churches.

The Roman prayers are in Latin, for instance. A violent Protestant says that the purpose is to keep the people in ignorance. A strong Romanist tells you that Latin was the universal language of educated men when these prayers were drawn up ; and puts it that it is a fine thing to think that in all Romish churches over Christendom the devotions of the people are expressed in the self-same words. Take keeping back the Bible from the people. To us nothing appears more flagrant than to deprive any man of God's written Word. Still the Romanist has something to say for himself. He puts it that there is so much difficulty in understanding much of the Bible—that such pernicious errors have followed from false interpretations of it. Think, even, of the dogma of the infallibility of the Church. The Protestant puts that dogma as an instance of unheard-of arrogance. The Romanist puts it as an instance of deep humility and earnest faith. He says he does not hold that the Church, in her own wisdom, is able to keep infallibly right ; but he says that he has perfect confidence that God will not suffer the Church deliberately to fall into error. Here, certainly, we have two very different ways of putting the same things.

But who shall say that there are no more than two ways of putting any incident, or any opinion, or any character ? There are innumerable ways—ways as many as are the idiosyncrasies of the men that put them. You have to describe an event, have you ? Then you may put it in the plain matter-of-fact way, like the *Times*' reporter ; or in the sublime way, like Milton and Mr. Wordy ; or in the ridiculous way, like *Punch* (of design) and Mr. Wordy (unintentionally) ; or in the romantic way, like Mr. G. P. R. James ; or in the minutely circumstantial way, like Defoe or Poe ; or in the affectedly simple way, like *Peter Bell* ;

or in the forcible, knowing way, like Macaulay ; or in the genial, manly, good-humoured way, like Sydney Smith ; or in the flippant way, like Mr. Richard Swiveller, who when he went to ask for an old gentleman, inquired as to the health of the 'ancient buffalo ;' or in the lackadaisical way, like many young women ; or in the whining, grumbling way, like many silly people whom it is unnecessary to name ; or in the pretentious, lofty way, introducing familiarly many titled names without the least necessity, like many natives of beautiful Erin.

What nonsense it is to say, as it has been said, that the effect of anything spoken or written depends upon the essential thought alone ! Why, nine-tenths of the practical power depends on the way in which it is put. Somebody has asserted that any thought which is not eloquent in any words whatever, is not eloquent at all. He might as well have said that black was white. Not to speak of the charm of the mere music of gracefully modulated words, and felicitously arranged phrases, how much there is in beautifully logical treatment, and beautifully clear development, that will interest a cultivated man in a speech or a treatise, quite irrespective of its subject ! I have known a very eminent man say that it was a delight to him to hear Follett make a speech, he did not care about what. The matter was no matter ; the intellectual treat was to watch how the great advocate put it. And we have all read with delight stories with no incident and little character, yet which derived a nameless fascination from the way in which they were told. Tell me truly, my fair reader, did you not shed some tears over Dickens's story of Richard Double-dick ? Could you have read that story aloud without breaking down ? And yet, was there ever a story with less in it ? But how beautifully Dickens put

what little there was, and how the melody of the closing sentences of the successive paragraphs lingers on the ear ! And you have not forgotten the exquisite touches with which Mrs. Stowe put so simple a matter as a mother looking into her dead baby's drawer. I have known an attempt at the pathetic made on a kindred topic provoke yells of laughter ; but I could not bear the woman, and hardly the man, who could read Mrs. Stowe's putting of that simple conception without the reverse of smiles. Many readers, too, will not forget how much more sharply they have seen many places and things, from railway-engine sheds to the Britannia Bridge, when put by the graphic pen of Sir Francis Head, that master of clear, sharp presentment.

I have not hitherto spoken of such ways of putting things as were practised in King Hudson's railway reports, or in those of the Glasgow Western Bank, cooked to make things pleasant by designed misrepresentation. So far we have been thinking of comparatively innocent variations in the ways of putting things — of putting the best foot foremost in a comparatively honest way. But how much intentional misrepresentation there is in British society ! How few people can tell a thing exactly as they saw it ! It goes in one colour, and comes out another, like light through tinted glass. It is rather amusing, by the way, when a friend comes and tells you a story which he heard from yourself, but so put that you hardly know it again. Unscrupulous putters of things should have good memories. There is no reckoning the ways in which, by varying the turn of an expression, by a tone or look, an entirely false view may be given of a conversation, a transaction, or an event. A lady says to her cook, You are by no means overworked. The cook complains in the servants' hall that her mistress said she had nothing to do. Lies, in the sense of

pure inventions, are not common, I believe, among people with any claim to respectability ; but it is perfectly awful to think how great a part of ordinary conversation, especially in little country towns, consists in putting things quite differently from the actual fact ; in short, of wilful misrepresentation. Many people cannot resist the temptation to deepen the colours, and strengthen the lines, of any narration, in order to make it more telling. Unluckily, things usually occur in life in such a manner as just to miss what would give them a point and make a good story of them ; and the temptation is strong to make them, by the deflection of a hair's-breadth, what they ought to have been.

It is sad to think, that in ninety-nine out of every hundred cases in which things are thus untruly put, the representation is made worse than the reality. Few old ladies endeavour, by their imaginative putting of things, to exhibit their acquaintances as wiser, better, and more amiable, than the fact. An exception may be made whenever putting her friends and their affairs in a dignified light would reflect credit upon the old lady herself. *Then*, indeed, their income is vast, their house is magnificent, their horses are Eclipses, their conversation is brilliant, their attention to their friends unwearying and indescribable. Alas for our race : that we lean to evil rather than to good, and that it is so much more easy and piquant to pitch into a man than to praise him !

Let us rejoice that there is one happy case in which the way of putting things, though often false, is always favourable. I mean the accounts which are given in country newspapers of the character and the doings of the great men of the district. I often admire the country editor's skill in putting all things (save the speech of the opposition M.P., as already mentioned) in such a rosy light ; nor do I admire his genial *bon-*

*homie* less than his art. If a marquis makes a stammering speech, it is sure to be put as most interesting and eloquent. If the rector preaches a dull and stupid charity sermon, it is put as striking and effective. A public meeting, consisting chiefly of empty benches, is put as most respectably attended. A gift of a little flannel and coals at Christmas-time, is put as seasonable munificence. A bald and seedy building, just erected in the High Street, is put as chaste and classical ; an extravagant display of gingerbread decoration, is put as gorgeous and magnificent. In brief, what other men heartily wish this world were, the conductors of local prints boldly declare that it is. Whatever they think a great man would like to be called, *that* they make haste to call him. Happy fellows, if they really believe that they live in such a world and among such beings as they put ! Their gushing heart is too much for even their sharp head, and they see all things glorified by the sunshine of their own exceeding amiability.

The subject widens on me, but the paper dwindleth : the five-and-forty fair expanses of foolscap are darkened at last. It would need a volume, not an essay, to do this matter justice. Sir Bulwer Lytton has declared, in pages charming but too many, that the world's great question is, **WHAT WILL HE DO WITH IT ?** I shall not debate the point, but simply add, that only second to that question in comprehensive reach and in practical importance is the question—**HOW WILL HE PUT IT ?**

(1859.)

### III.

#### PROFESSOR BUCHANAN OF GLASGOW.

'AH, if I give you half-a-crown, it will be all right.  
Yes. Here it is.'

Such were the first words I heard uttered by that eminent Scotch Professor. They were said with a keen look, in a mild pursy voice, to a vulgar rough lad who had come to enter the Logic class on the last day of a departed October ; and who had not sense enough to have the fee exactly right and ready to hand over, thus in so far as might be etherealising the pecuniary transaction. I see the snug little study, low-roofed, crowded with books, very academic in its air, with two little windows looking out on the Professors' Court in the University of Glasgow. No pilgrim need think to visit that curious spot. The space is there, space being irremovable ; but the University is gone. A railway station occupies the sacred ground. Stretching along the crowded High Street, there still abides the façade which has stood there for some centuries, very black of aspect. But when you pass under the low-browed archway, beneath which many generations of shivering students have passed at 7.25 A.M., through the dismal Glasgow winter, the venerable though shabby courts are not there. Overhead is a roof of iron girders : before you

are the familiar arrangements of railway travel. There are those (the writer is one) who cannot suppress a keen sense of profanation. I have, in sober truth, known an old Glasgow student drop a tear. But on a western hill, amid pure air, in an uncrowded suburban region, a noble pile now stands, the result of the genius of Sir Gilbert Scott : and there the ancient University, newly housed but still the same, welcomes its two thousand students to its crowded halls. The sentimental must yield. Sensible folk will not run the risk of typhoid fever for the sake of old associations. And the present beautiful buildings abundantly compensate the loss of a structure which was more rickety than venerable. They are anything but complete. The wealth and liberality of Glasgow may find scope there for centuries to come. Let it be hoped that they will.

But the old walls rise again, the shabby old courts surround us, recalling the great Professor of more than thirty years ago. It was the intellectual birth-time of many a Scotch lad to pass through the class of fine old Professor Buchanan. It is curious that no memorial of his long life and work has appeared : Glasgow folk are too busy, and in Buchanan's days it was not the fashion to puff in print such work as his. One has, in recent years, seen a good deal of puffery, of work not a tenth part as thorough and influential. For nearly forty years he was Professor of Logic. In the second year of their University course all Scotch students must attend that class. And in the writer's year the class numbered just two hundred. At half-past eight each morning the Professor lectured for an hour, reading the same lectures year after year : and at eleven o'clock the class re-assembled for examination on the lectures, conducted *vivâ voce*, and for the reading of essays. Six mornings in the week did the class meet : and five fore-

noons, from the 1st of November to the 1st of May. There was a brief intermission at Christmas. The course of Lectures began with a very thorough discussion of the Intellectual Powers: the Professor being in the main a disciple of the Scotch school of Reid and Dugald Stewart; then came a minute explanation of the Aristotelian Logic; next, some account of the Logic of Induction; and finally a few lectures on literary Aesthetics, the chair taking in Rhetoric as well as Logic.

I see again the old Professor as he fished the half-crown out of his pocket, and with a frank calculation handed it to the rough student, who was attired in the regulation red-frieze gown. A young lad going to enter an unknown class in an unknown College is nervous: but I remember vividly wondering when the rough student had last brushed his huge mop of hair. He went: and the Professor's regards were turned upon the writer. Though Professor Buchanan was a clergyman of the Scotch Church, and had long been incumbent of the little Tweedside town of Peebles (the same of which a local magistrate said, after a first visit to the Continent, 'Paris is grand, but Peebles for pleasure'), he had discarded all clerical attire, and would never proceed beyond the degree of M.A. In a blue frock-coat, a yellow waistcoat and gray trousers he stood by a tall desk, at which he wrote standing. He had a lofty forehead, bald: regular features, with a good deal of fresh colour, smooth and unwrinkled. But though his expression was mild, there was that about him, specially in the sharp small eyes, which make it absolutely certain that no student should ever presume upon him. Those two hundred lads, varying in age from sixteen to five-and-twenty, listened in dead silence to the low voice of the Professor reading his lectures quietly and beautifully: sat, in like order,

through the examination-hour. It is a great gift when a Professor, without demonstration, can maintain such a state of things. Just across the court where Buchanan lectured, one of the greatest scholars of the age kept most imperfect order by frequent wrathful objurgations: Buchanan never raised his voice. But the roughest student felt it would not do to take liberties. It is a question of the nature of the animal.

The greatest of Scotch Hebrew scholars, the late Professor Macgill of St. Andrews, was accustomed to relate the legend of the single occasion on which any interruption arose in Buchanan's class. One morning the Professor was reading his lecture in his low musical voice, and the students generally were eagerly taking notes of it (many students formed a shorthand of their own in which they could take down the lectures nearly verbatim), when a tittering sound was heard from the middle of the lecture-room. The benches rose gradually and were arranged in a semicircular fashion. The Professor stopped, and with eagle eye regarded that part of the chamber. There he perceived a student, with exceptive powers of pulling horrible faces, dreadfully distorting his features, to the audible amusement of those around. With the mildest voice, with the benignant smile, but with the warning eye, the Professor addressed the student. 'Mr. Smith, I cordially sympathise with you in your desire to improve the expression of your countenance. But let me assure you, as a friend, that those distortions are not improvements.' The class roared. And poor Smith never made faces in the Logic class any more.

Such was Professor Buchanan, whom the more irreverent ventured to call *Logic Bob*. It was a singularly inappropriate name. He was Professor of Logic, and his name was Robert: but anything less like the

similitude conveyed by the familiar monosyllable could not be. No student could ever be quite at his ease in that man's presence: there were none of the weaknesses about him which young lads are so sharp to see in those placed over them. There was not a loophole in his shining mail. He never sank beneath the highest level of his students' respect. But nobody liked him. You did not quite fear him, but you felt uncomfortable with him. And I think he felt uncomfortable with you. Any interview was brief, and it was cut short with mutual relief. But among a host of eminent scholars and teachers, forming in those days the staff of that great University, Buchanan was the best teacher. He made his students work, wonderfully: he opened and formed their minds. No doubt, he was placed at an advantage. There was something wonderfully fresh and cheering to students with some small measure of brains, in getting away from the wearisome iteration of perpetual Latin and Greek, to a subject in which their reasoning powers were called upon. Here was something new and delightful: and many clever lads, who had found themselves at a hopeless disadvantage in Classics through being placed alongside others who had been infinitely better grounded, felt as if they had for the first time a fair start. All were equally ignorant to begin: and not information so much as sharpness and readiness availed one here. A thoughtful youth from the plough, or from the parish school, could here hold his own with the Archbishop of Canterbury, coming to these benches from being head-boy of the Edinburgh Academy; or with the present Scottish Chief Justice, the Follett of the North, the Lord-President Inglis. But indeed this was not so only in the Philosophy classes. The Professor of Greek of departed years, the renowned Sandford (who died the day he was forty), used to point out a pale

lad, the son of a small butcher in the Salt-market (honoured and unforgotten be the name of JAMES HALLEY), as 'the man who beat Tait.' Yet Tait, beaten at Glasgow, has done fairly elsewhere.

Professor Buchanan was one of seven brothers, of whom six were clergymen of the Scotch Church, all beneficed. The seventh brother was an *Elder* : and it is on record that in one year all the seven were members of the General Assembly of the Kirk. He was a native of Callander in Perthshire, a village well known to many a Saxon tourist, the capital of the country of the *Lady of the Lake*. He never married : and no man was ever more essentially an old bachelor. The exquisite primness of his house would have been impossible had its doors been slammed and its carpets befouled by half-a-dozen noisy children : and though the Glasgow Professorships of the ancient foundation are by far the most valuable preferments of the Scotch Universities, yet the ample income which placed Buchanan in affluence, and which added to the quaint old house in the Professors' Court the charming little domain of Ardfillayne on the Argyleshire side of the Frith of Clyde, would have been a very different thing if it had had to bear the charges of a family ; and an entire freedom from all pecuniary care was a vital element in the Professor's character and life. It was one of the sights of the old College to glance, in passing, through a window which lighted his lobby, and to behold the solitary tall hat with its broad brim hung upon an unvarying peg, and the one umbrella, consummate in neatness, tightly folded up below.

Professor Buchanan was a punster. Let not the reader fear that I am about to relate specimens of his jocular vein. For puns, speaking generally, can be classed only as Bad, Worse, and Worst. And a pun, if enjoyed at all, must (like gooseberries) be

enjoyed where it came into being. Every one knows the sadness of a string of recorded jests: how flat such fall when detached from the surroundings of their origin: when there is no longer the look of production upon the instant whence comes the 'sudden glory ;' when the jest is not floated out by the flow of animal spirits in the joker which launches it triumphantly. Just one of the Professor's puns shall abide on this page, which possibly looks the brighter because I heard of it yesterday for the first time.

The Duke of Montrose, Chancellor of the University of Glasgow, was accustomed occasionally to entertain the Professors at his house on Loch Lomond. One day a number of these learned men formed a party and drove to Buchanan House in a large omnibus. A squally wind sprang up during the lengthy drive, and the question arose from what point of the compass it blew. But so fitful was the wind, that great diversity of opinion was expressed; and, each man sticking to his own idea, the controversy grew angry. Then the Professor intervened, and cast oil upon the waters. 'It is plain, gentlemen,' he said, 'that in this case the axiom holds good, *De gustibus non est disputandum.*'

The writer possesses two volumes, very rarely opened, of closely-written notes of Professor Buchanan's Lectures. One took notes in pencil: and then, with the lecture fresh in one's memory, wrote them fully out at home. I have just read over the memorial of the Introductory Lecture: and the old time comes very clearly back. There is the square lecture-room, rather low-roofed: the crowded benches: the Professor seated in a little pulpit, with a blazing fire hard by: and in a lesser box, on his right, the *censor* of the week, a student told-off to call over the names of the class and ascertain who were present and absent.

The names were called in Latin : and (as with Colonel Newcome) the answer was *Adsum*. A warm glow of scarlet pervades the benches from the students' gowns, pleasant in the cold winter day. That opening lecture was given at eleven o'clock. The quiet voice in one's ears : ' What is Logic ? What is the subject matter about which it is conversant ? What end has it in view ? ' The discourse was very clear : very full in its information : it was expressed with beautiful neatness of style ; but the style was never more than exquisitely neat : there never came the bursts of pathetic, if somewhat tawdry eloquence which in the Moral Philosophy class-room, just across the quadrangle, sometimes made the students drop their pencils and stare at the Professor, open-mouthed. Passages of the opening Logic lecture recur verbatim. ' To think, judge, and reason : are these useful ? To be able to do these at all, distinguishes the man from the brute : to be able to do these well distinguishes the man from the child, the civilised man from the savage, Newton from the clown.' The tradition went, that years before it had been ' Socrates from the savage.' A full account was given of the order of the course of instruction. The use of a logical training to all sorts of men was pointed out. Then came the little conclusion :

' Difficulties will vanish on a nearer view ; we shall see the beautiful simplicity of the primary laws which direct us. On the nearest view Philosophy looks her best : then we feel that the words are true of the greatest logician among the poets, and the greatest poet among the logicians, that Philosophy is

Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,  
 But musical as is Apollo's lute,  
 And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,  
 Where no crude surfeit reigns.'

The Introductory Lecture was not a display of fireworks, as some such lectures are; but really a business-like setting to work. Then came the shortening days, the slushy streets, the dismal mornings when in darkness and utter misery the students in several large classes had to be in their lecture-room by half-past seven in the morning. It was a dreary time. Yet, strange to say, by degrees hard-working students came to like those early hours. There was first, the sense that you were practising self-denial, and taking a great deal out of yourself: enduring tribulation: which to young fellows, determined that life shall be earnest and noble, is a very fascinating thing. And further, certain hours were turned to account which would otherwise have been spent in bed, and hours at a later part of the day were thus set free. Still, as these present December mornings, inexpressible in their dreariness, pass over one, the old time comes over us, and we mourn for our poor over-worked selves of many years ago. All Glasgow students have gone through a good deal. Whether it was worth while to go through as much for all that one has made of it, may sometimes present itself as a question in later years.

Looking back, one sees Professor Buchanan, two minutes before the appointed hour daily, walking through the crowded quadrangle towards his class-room door, with a large portfolio under his arm containing his lecture, looking neither to right nor left. He wears his gown, but the decorous square cap of the present time at Glasgow was as yet unknown; and the incongruous combination of gown and hat was yet to be seen. It looked very bad, to eyes trained to other things. A miserable tinkling is presently heard, from a wretched bell in a lofty but ugly tower; on the warmest spring day that sound made one shiver, so associated was it with winter darkness and general

misery. As the sound ceased, the Professor rose and said 'Let us pray.' The little prayers which began the day's work were very felicitous. Buchanan was among the first in Scotland who began to carefully compose public prayers. Better days have come; and that is the rule now with all Scotch clergymen on whose ministrations educated folk could be supposed to attend. But, even as a young lad, one could not but think how different Buchanan's quiet beautiful prayers were from the rude sprawling extemporaneous effusions common; wholly devoid of devotional character, and which could only be said to be expressed in the English language in the sense that they were not expressed in any other. The sharp distinctions of the early lectures were at first somewhat hard: but the tough work came after Christmas with the Moods and Figures of the Aristotelian logic. One had to make believe pretty strenuously, then, to regard that as 'a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets.' However, it was got through: and probably the students were permanently bettered for the stern exercise of such minds as they had. It was made plain, by the examinations, that almost every one intelligently followed the lectures. The Scotch mind has a real affinity to that kind of thing. It was not, here, as in another class, appointed to hear the lectures of a famous teacher of physical science. The report was that there, out of a hundred and twenty students, two understood the lectures: a third understood bits here and there: and a hundred and seventeen understood nothing.

At the forenoon hour several students were called on, one after another, for *vivâ voce* examination on the lectures. The Professor was an admirable examiner. The questions thoroughly tested the students' attention and intelligence. They gradually became

very difficult. If the man under examination could not answer, the question was put to his bench: then to other benches, by their number. Thus students had the chance of distinguishing themselves. Subjects were prescribed for essays: and students were called to read portions of these. I do not know how they might strike one now, but they appeared for the most part remarkably good. Indeed, in those days one made sure that some of one's fellow-students would make a far greater figure in after-life than in fact they have done. Narrow circumstances and heavy cares have, I am still persuaded, abated great makings, and quenched true fires. And almost all Scotch students were poor when at college, and never know easy circumstances at any period of life. Late in the session, each student was called to write what was called a *Descriptive Exercise*; that is, a tale, or poem, selecting his own subject. These were given in to the Professor, who privately read them, and then called each young author to read before the class a part of his production. It used to be said that in some cases the old gentleman took pleasure in selecting the most absurd passage. And I have heard very absurd passages. I could quote some, word for word, but it shall not be done. It was just the brightest and cleverest lads who effloresced into these extravagances. A lad who is terribly sensible at nineteen, and writes in accurate taste, will be very dreary at forty. The hopeful youth is the one who has a good deal of juvenile eloquence to prune off. He will work through his grand things and crudities, and yet retain some liveliness and fire. At the end of the session, the prizes for general eminence in the class work are decided by the votes of the students: almost invariably with great fairness.

The vacation at Glasgow begins on the first of May, and lasts without a break (except in the case of some of the medical chairs) till the beginning of November. Here is the fact which makes a Scotch Chair, with its moderate income, be regarded as a prize by men of high eminence. For the pleasanter half of the year a Professor of Classics, or Philosophy, or Divinity, is free to go where he pleases, and do what he pleases. He has opportunity for travel, or for literary work, such as falls to the lot of hardly any other professional man, living by his labour. Professor Buchanan formed for himself a rural retreat, far from the noise of Glasgow, where he spent his vacations in lettered ease. A space of some eight or ten acres, which was gradually increased to a considerable domain, was made as much of as Shenstone made of the Leasowes. The ground reaches along the Frith of Clyde, near Dunoon, in Argyleshire, looking across to Ayrshire. The soil is genial, the climate mild, the prospects wide and beautiful.

A graceful Gothic dwelling formed the philosopher's cell: and no more enthusiastic landscape gardener ever set himself to the cheerful task of making the most of kindly nature. Here shrubs, which elsewhere require the shelter of a greenhouse, grow into considerable trees: the gleam of the sea is everywhere, and the horizon of hills, purple or blue. Not in Europe will you find scenery that surpasses that of the homely Clyde: and though no man can say which is the loveliest spot of that lovely Frith, it may be said that Buchanan had found as fair a spot as any. Here, it is recorded, a strong-minded lady thought to share the professor's solitude. With that view she called for him, and informed him, with much significance, that all the neighbours were saying that he and she were about to be married. 'Ah,' said the Pro-

fessor, with his wariest look, 'then we'll cheat them!' And beyond his devotion to his beloved trees and flowers, here he cultivated the muses. About the end of 1839, Professor Buchanan surprised his friends by sending them a thin quarto volume, of only seventy-two pages, bearing the title, *Fragments of the Table Round*: a series of Arthurian ballads written many years before. They are graceful in versification; but, truth to say, there is a somewhat disagreeable taint about them: and those who looked up with reverence to their old Professor, and thought that everything he did was better than any other man could do, felt that he had stepped down somewhat from the pedestal on which they had set him up, when he published the little volume. It was anonymous: but the copy now before me bears the inscription, 'With kind regards from the author,' in a handwriting not to be forgotten: and when the present writer, on the self-same day the book reached him, met his revered instructor on an Edinburgh street, and thanked him for his gift, though Professor Buchanan's first exclamation was, 'Thou canst not say *I* did it!' yet he at once acknowledged the authorship: saying that these trifles had been lying about for thirty years, and he thought he might as well print them and be done with them.

I think it was in 1865 that Buchanan resigned his chair, and retreated to his beloved Ardfillayne. He was not a man to take almost any mortal into his confidence: but certain *Lines written on destroying by fire a large mass of Manuscript Papers* seem to convey that those memorable *Lectures*, written on folio pages, which had formed the mind of many Scotchmen and Englishmen, had perished. It was a tradition that on being appointed to his chair his sermons met a like fate: and it is certain that though

exemplary in his attendance at church, he never entered a pulpit in the last forty years of his life. He had been a specially attractive preacher: but he preached no more. It was vain for Buchanan to burn his lectures: fifty living men could re-produce them nearly word for word. But at least the details of the way he did his work went; which was something to a secretive man. I have just caught glimpses of the faded pages, with fresh bits of paper pasted in here and there. *Vidi tantum*: and I do not believe any one else ever saw more. The lines begin:—

‘ That puny pile upon my blackened hearth  
 So airy light it seems imponderable,  
 In bulk so small, but scant a shovel’s full,—  
 In that poor heap of unsubstantial dust  
 Do I behold the labour of long years,  
 Concentred, and consigned to nothingness ?

‘ Even so.—The plaything of the flame, I’ve seen  
 Ere one short hour had made its dial mark,  
 Of two-score years the purchase and the pains  
 Dissolved to ashes, or dispersed in air.’

It was a remarkable list of old students, headed by the present Archbishop of Canterbury,\* that presented Buchanan with an address of grateful farewell, when he left the chair he had filled with such mastery of his work through those long years. And now it was that in his leisure he began to arrange and put forth much verse, written many years before. Several little volumes, of somewhat shabby appearance, were published anonymously: and finally in 1868 two handsome and substantial tomes appeared, entitled *Tragic Dramas from History: with Legendary and other Poems. By Robert Buchanan, M.A., late Professor of Logic and Rhetoric in the University of Glasgow.* The first play is *Wallace, a Tragedy*: the second *James*

\* Tait.

*the First of Scotland, a Tragedy* : the next *The British Brothers, a Drama*. No one can say but that these plays are excellent specimens of accurate academic writing : Look into them anywhere, and you find graceful verses and poetic thought. But they are not so supremely good as in any way to please the old Glasgow students who had looked up with a singular shrinking reverence to their Professor. They do not carry the reader on : it is a task to get through them.

It was when Buchanan was a man of eighty that he published poems which he had held back during his prime and maturity. Some *Verses Introductory* set out by stating what indeed was true :

‘ The grandsire doteth on the darling boy  
The father doth but love. Perchance even so  
'Tis but the grandsire at my heart that dotes,  
And in these younglings of the brain discerns  
Beauty their sire with manhood's eye undazed  
Saw not, or saw but coldly qualified.’

Let it be confessed, the *Miscellaneous Poems* which fill half of the second volume are the more attractive. One discerns in them a great deal more of the heart, and inner life, of the old Professor, than he would have readily confided to an actual friend. One sees the delight he took in the beautiful landscape he had created round his seaside home : his ever-fresh interest in all the work daily doing there ; and rather sadly, too, that he grew old unwillingly, and did not like the thought of leaving his darling trees to the vague somebody who might buy his property when he was gone. One thinks, looking at these verses, of a Scotch bumpkin's remark, quoted on a page like this many years ago, but which may be quoted again : ‘ Our minister aye preaches aboot going to Heaven, but he'll never go to Heaven as long as he can get stoppin' at Drumsleekie.’

' And here, exhausted his tumultuous roll  
 Where the Atlantic in our quiet creeks  
 Serenes his weary waves, and Age has found  
 Hearth and a halting-place, amused with toys :  
 Playing the poet in my poor domain,  
 Though small, yet fair as youth's fond dream designed,  
 To lap my life's decline—with axe or saw,  
 Or spade or mattock, amid copse and cliff,  
 Shaping or changing, but with reverent hand,  
 Nature's fair forms to fairer, glen and grove,  
 And vaulted grot and vaulting waterfall,  
 And fountain bubbles in its rocky cave :—  
 Here, too, mine age-mate neighbours one by one,  
 And year by year, they drop, till scarce I scan  
 In the thronged pew when Sabbath-morn comes round,  
 One old familiar face ! '

And so, amid the beauties he had created, and so long enjoyed, the great Glasgow Professor faded out of this life. I know how vainly I have sought to convey to such as did not know him what he was. Only by personal knowledge of his work, day by day, could you take in what he was. Only his students knew him ; and his chief favourites among them were held at far more than arm's length. There is nothing so borne in upon one, as years pass away, as the tremendous truth of the old commonplaces which one heard and said as a boy and a youth, but did not in the least believe. The chiefest of these, it seems to the writer, is that time goes on ; and that all interests, all careers, all things here, begin and wax and wane and end. 'The things which are seen are temporal.' It is this one feels most deeply, looking back on one's old Professor, and one's old student days : so influential then, so real and hard then : so shadowy now.

(1859.)

## IV.

### CONCERNING GROWING OLD.

I WAS sitting, on a very warm and bright summer morning, upon a gravestone in the churchyard. It was a flat gravestone, elevated upon four little pillars, and covering the spot where sleeps the mortal part of a venerable clergyman who preceded me in my parish, and who held the charge of it for sixty years. I had gone down to the churchyard as usual, for a while after breakfast, with a little companion who in those days was generally with me wherever I went. And while she was walking about attended by a solemn dog, I sat down in the sunshine on the stone, gray with lichen and green with moss. I thought of the old gentleman who had slept below for fifty years. I wondered if he had sometimes come to the churchyard after breakfast before he began his task of sermon-writing. I reflected how his heart, mouldered into dust, was now so free from all the little heats and worries which will find their way into even the quietest life in this world. And, sitting there, I put down my right hand upon the mossy stone. The contrast of the hand upon the green surface caught the eye of my companion, who was not four years old. She came slowly up, and laid down her own hand beside mine on the mossy expanse. And after looking at it in various ways for several minutes,

and contrasting her own little hand with the weary one which is now writing this page, she asked thoughtfully and doubtfully—‘Was your hand ever a little hand like mine?’

Yes, I said, as I spread it out on the stone, and looked at it: it seems a very short time since that was a little hand like yours. It was a fat little hand: not the least like those thin fingers and many wrinkles now. When it grew rather bigger, the fingers had generally various and deep cuts, got in making and rigging ships: those were the days when I intended to be a sailor. It gradually grew bigger, as all little hands will do, if spared in this world. And now, it has done a great many things. It has smoothed the heads of many children, and the noses of various horses. It has travelled, I thought to myself, along thousands of written pages. It has paid away money, and occasionally received it. In many things that hand has fallen short, I thought; yet several things which that hand found to do, it did with its might. So here, I thought, were three hands, not far apart. There was the little hand of infancy; four daisies were lying near it on the gravestone where it was laid down to compare with mine. Then the rather skinny and not very small hand, which is doing now the work of life. And a couple of yards beneath, there was another hand, whose work was over. It was a hand which had written many sermons, preached in that plain church; which had turned over the leaves of the large pulpit-Bible (very old and shabby) which I turn over now: which had often opened the door of the house where now I live. And when I got up from the gravestone, and was walking quietly homeward, many thoughts came into my mind CONCERNING GROWING OLD.

And, indeed, many of the most affecting thoughts

which can ever enter the human mind are concerning the lapse of time, and the traces which its lapse leaves upon human beings. There is something that touches us in the bare thought of Growing Old. I know a house on certain of whose walls there hang portraits of members of the family for many years back. It is the house of a not wealthy gentleman. The portraits represent people whose minds do not run much upon deep speculations or upon practical politics ; but who no doubt had many thoughts as to how they should succeed in getting the ends to meet. I remember there the portrait of a frail old lady, plainly on the farthest confines of life. More than fourscore years had left their trace on the venerable head : you could fancy you saw the aged hands shaking. Opposite there hung the picture of a blooming girl, in the fresh May of beauty. The blooming girl was the mother of the venerable dame of fourscore. Painting catches but a glimpse of time ; but it keeps that glimpse. On the canvas the face never grows old. As Dekker has it, ' False colours last after the true be fled.' I have often looked at the two pictures, in a confused sort of reverie. If you ask what it is that I thought of in looking at them, I truly cannot tell you. The fresh young beauty was the mother : the aged grand-dame was the child : *that* was really all. But there are certain thoughts upon which you can vaguely brood for a long time.

You remember reading how upon a day not many years since, certain miners, working far underground, came upon the body of a poor fellow who had perished in the suffocating pit forty years before. Some chemical agent to which the body had been subjected had arrested the progress of decay. They brought it up to the surface : and for awhile, till it crumbled away through exposure to the atmosphere, it lay there,

the image of a fine sturdy young man. No convulsion had passed over the face in death : the features were tranquil ; the hair was black as jet. No one recognised the face : a generation had grown up since the day on which the miner went down his shaft for the last time. But a tottering old woman, who had hurried from her cottage at hearing the news, came up : and she knew again the face which through all these years she had never quite forgot. The poor miner was to have been her husband the day after that on which he died. They were rough people who were looking on : but there were no dry eyes there when the gray-headed old pilgrim cast herself upon the youthful body, and poured out to its deaf ear words of endearment unused for forty years. The one so old, the other so young : it was a moving contrast. They had both been young, these long years ago : but time had gone on with the living and stood still with the dead.

It is difficult to account for the precise kind and degree of feeling with which we should have witnessed the little picture. I state the fact : I can say no more. I mention it in proof of my principle, that a certain vague pensiveness is the result of musing upon the lapse of time ; and a certain undefinable pathos of any incident which brings strongly home to us that lapse and its effects.

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed  
The spring beneath the tree :  
And thus the dear old man replied,  
The gray-haired man of glee :

No check, no stay, that streamlet fears—  
How merrily it goes !  
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,  
And flow as now it flows.

And here, on this delightful day,  
I cannot choose but think

How oft, a vigorous man, I lay  
Beside this fountain's brink.

My eyes are dim with childish tears,  
My heart is idly stirred,  
For the same sound is in my ears  
Which in those days I heard.

That is really the sum of what is to be said on the subject. And it has always appeared to me that Mr. Dickens has shown an amount of philosophical insight which does not always characterise him, when he wrote certain reflections, which he puts in the mouth of one Mr. Roker, who was a turnkey in the Fleet Prison. I do not know why it should be so ; but these words are to me more strikingly truthful than almost any others which the eminent author ever produced.

‘ You remember Tom Martin, Neddy ? Bless my dear eyes,’ said Mr. Roker, shaking his head slowly from side to side, and gazing abstractedly out of the grated window before him, as if he were fondly recalling some peaceful scene of his early youth, ‘ it seems but yesterday that he whopped the coal-heaver down at the Fox-under-the-Hill, by the wharf there. I think I can see him now, a coming up the Strand between the two street-keepers, a little sobered by the bruising, with a patch of vinegar and brown paper over his right eyelid, and that ’ere lovely bull-dog, as pinned the little boy arterwards, a following at his heels. What a rum thing time is, ain’t it, Neddy ? ’

Here we find, truthfully represented, an essential mood of the human mind. It is a more pleasing picture, perhaps, that comes back upon us in startling freshness, making us wonder if it is really so long ago since then. Our sentiment with regard to time is more elegantly expressed ; but it really comes to this. You can say no more of time than that it is a strange, undefinable, inexplicable thing ; and when, by some caprice of memory, some long departed scene comes vividly back, what more defi-

nite thing can you do than just shake your head, and gaze abstractedly, like Mr. Roker ? Like distant bells upon the breeze, some breath from childhood shows us plainly for a moment the little thing that was ourself. What more can you do but look at the picture, and feel that it is strange ? More important things have been forgotten ; but you remember how, when you were four years old, you ran a race along a path with a green slope beside it, and watched the small shadow keeping pace with you along the green slope ; or you recall the precise feeling with which you sat down in the railway carriage on the day when you first came home from school for the holidays, and felt the train glide away. And when these things return, what can you do but lean your head upon your hand, and vaguely muse and feel ? I have always much admired the truthful account of the small boy's fancies, as he sits and gazes into the glowing fire ' with his wee round face.' Mr. Ballantine is a true philosopher as well as a true poet.

For a' sae sage he looks, what can the laddie ken ?  
He's THINKIN' UPON NAETHING, like mony mighty men !

We can all ' think of naething,' and think of it for a long time, while yet the mind is by no means a blank.

It is very easy, in one sense, to Grow Old. You have but to sit still and do nothing, and Time passing over you will make you old. But to Grow Old wisely and genially, is one of the most difficult tasks to which a human being can ever set himself. It is very hard to make up your mind to it. Some men grow old, struggling and recalcitrant, dragged along against their will, clinging to each birthday as a drowning man catches at an overhanging bough.

Some folk grow old, gracefully and fittingly. I think that, as a general rule, the people who least reluctantly grow old, are worthy men and women, who see their children growing up into all that is good and admirable, with equal steps to those by which they feel themselves to be growing downward. A better, nobler, and happier self, they think, will take their place ; and in all the success, honour, and happiness of that new self, they can feel a purer and worthier pride than they ever felt in their own. But the human being who has no one to represent him when he is gone, will naturally wish to put off the time of his going as long as may be. It seems to be a difficult thing to hit the medium between clinging foolishly to youth and making an affected parade of age. Entire naturalness upon this subject appears to be very hard of attainment. You know how many people, men as well as women, pretend to be younger than they really are. I have found various motives lead to this pretence. I have known men, distinguished at a tolerably early age in some walk of intellectual exertion, who in announcing their age (which they frequently did without any necessity), were wont to deduct three or five years from the actual tale. They wished to be recognised as infant phenomena. To be an eloquent preacher is always an excellent thing ; but how much more wonderful if the preacher be no more than twenty-two or twenty-three. To repeat *The Battle of Hohen-linden* is a worthy achievement ; but the foolish parent pats his child's head with special exultation, as he tells you that his child, who has just repeated that popular poem, is no more than two years old. It is not improbable that the child's real age is two years and eleven months. It is very likely that the preacher's real age is twenty-eight. I remember

hearing of a certain clerical person who, presuming on a very youthful aspect, gave himself out as twenty-four, when in fact he was thirty. Apart from the dishonesty, I do not think that judicious people will value very highly the crude fruit which has been forced to a certain ripeness before its time. Let us have the mature thing. Give us intellectual beef, rather than intellectual veal. In the domain of poetry, great things have occasionally been done at a very early age ; you do not insist upon sound and judicious views of life in poetry. For plain sense and practical guidance, you go elsewhere. But in every other department of literature, the value of a production is in direct proportion to the amount of the experience which it embodies. A man can speak with authority only of that which he has himself felt and known. A man cannot paint portraits till he has seen faces. And all feeling, and most moods of mind, will be very poorly described by one who takes his notion of them at second-hand. When you are very young yourself, you may read with sympathy the writings of very young men ; but when you have reached maturity, and learned by experience the details and realities of life, you will be conscious of a certain indefinable want in such writings. And I do not know that this defect can be described more definitely than by saying that the entire thing is veal, not beef. You have the immature animal. You have the 'berries harsh and crude.'

But long after the period at which it is possible to assume the position of the infant phenomenon, you still find many men anxious to represent themselves as a good deal younger than they are. To the population of Britain generally, ten years elapse before one census is followed by the next ; but some persons, in these ten years, grow no more than two

or three years older. Let me confess that abhorrence of such men. Their conduct affects me with an indescribable disgust. I dislike it more than many things which in themselves are probably more evil morally. Such men are, in the essential meaning of the word, *humbugs*; shams; impostures; false pretences. They are an embodied falsehood, their very personality is a lie; and you don't know what about them may next prove to be a deception. Looking at a man who says he is forty-three when in fact he is above sixty, I suspect him all over. I am in doubt whether his hair, his teeth, his eyes, are real. I do not know whether that breadth of chest be the development of manly bone and muscle, or the skilful padding of the tailor. I am not sure how much is the man, and how much the work of his valet. I suspect that his whiskers and moustache are dyed. I look at his tight boots, and think how they must be tormenting his poor old corny feet. I admire his affected buoyancy of manner, and think how the miserable creature must collapse when he finds himself alone, and is no longer compelled by the presence of company to put himself on the stretch, and carry on that wretched acting. When I see the old reptile whispering in a corner to a girl of eighteen, or furtively squeezing her in a waltz, I should like extremely to take him by the neck and shake him till he came into the pieces of which he is made up. And when I have heard (long ago) such a one, with a hideous gloating relish, telling a profane or indecent story; or instilling cynical and impious notions of life and things into the minds of young lads; or (more disgusting still) using phrases of double meaning in the presence of innocent young women, and enjoying their innocent ignorance of his sense; I have thought that I was beholding as degraded a phase of human

nature as you will find on the face of this sinful world. Oh venerable age ; gray, wise, kindly sympathetic ; before which I shall never cease reverently to bend, respecting even what I may (wrongly perhaps) esteem your prejudices ; that *you* should be caricatured and degraded in that foul old leering satyr !

But though all this be so, there is a sense in which I interpret the clinging to youth, in which there is nothing contemptible about it, but much that is touching and pleasing. I abominate the padded, rouged, dyed old sham ; but I heartily respect the man or woman, pensive and sad, as some little circumstance has impressed upon them the fact that they are growing old. A man or woman is a fool, who is indignant at being called *the old lady* or *the old gentleman* when these phrases state the truth ; but there is nothing foolish or unworthy when some such occurrence brings it home to us, with something of a shock, that we are no longer reckoned among the young, and that the innocent and impressionable days of childhood (so well remembered) are beginning to be far away. We are drawing nearer, we know, to certain solemn realities, of which we speak much and feel little ; the undiscovered country (humbly sought through the pilgrimage of life) is looming in the distance before. We feel that life is not long, and is not commonplace, when it is regarded as the portal to eternity. And probably nothing will bring back the season of infancy and early youth upon any thoughtful man's mind so vividly as the sense that he is growing old. How short a time since then ! You look at your great brown hand. It seems like yesterday since a boy-companion (gray now) tried to print your name upon the little paw, and there was not room. You remember it (is it five-and-twenty years since ?) as it looked when laid

on the head of a friendly dog, two or three days before you found him poisoned and dead ; and helped, not without tears, to bury him in the garden under an apple-tree. You see, as plainly as if you saw it now, his brown eye, as it looked at you in life for the last time: And as you feel these things, you quite unaffectedly and sincerely put off, time after time, the period at which you will accept it as a fact, that you are old. Twenty-eight, thirty, thirty-five, forty-eight, mark years on reaching which you will still feel yourself young ; many men honestly think that sixty-five or sixty-eight is the prime of life. A less amiable accompaniment of this pleasing belief is often found in a disposition to call younger men (and not very young) *boys*. I have heard that word uttered in a very spiteful tone, as though it were a name of great reproach. There are few epithets which I have ever heard applied in a manner betokening greater bitterness, than that of *a clever lad*. You remember how Sir Robert Walpole hurled the charge of youth against Pitt. You remember how Pitt (or Dr. Johnson for him) defended himself with great force of argument against the imputation. Possibly in some cases envy is at the root of the matter. Not every man has the magnanimity of Sir Bulwer Lytton, who tells us so frankly and so often how much he would like to be young again if he could.

To grow old is so serious a matter, that it always appears to me as if there was something like profanation in putting the fact or its attendant circumstances in a ludicrous manner. I do not think that there is anything really amusing in the spectacle of a human being giving up hold after hold to which he had clung, and sinking always lower and lower ; and there is no doubt, that in a physical sense, we soon come to do all that in the process of growing old. And

though you may put each little mortification, each petty coming down, in a way amusing to bystanders, it should always be remembered that each may imply a severe pang on the part of the man himself. We smile when Mr. Dickens tells us concerning his hero, Mr. Tupman, that

Time and feeding had expanded that once romantic form ; the black silk waistcoat had become more and more developed ; inch by inch had the gold watch-chain beneath it disappeared from within the range of Tupman's vision ; and gradually had the capacious chin encroached upon the borders of the white cravat : but the soul of Tupman had known no change.

Now, although Mr. Tupman was an exceedingly fat man physically, and morally (to say the truth) a very great fool, you may rely upon it that as each little circumstance had occurred which his biographer has recorded, it would be a very serious circumstance in the feeling of poor Tupman himself. And this not nearly so much for the little personal mortification implied in each step of expanding bulk and lessening agility, but because each would be felt as a milestone, marking the progress of Tupman from his cradle to his grave. Each would be something to signify that the innocence and freshness of childhood were left so much farther behind, and that the reality of life was growing more hard and prosaic. It is some feeling like this which makes it a sad thing to lay aside an old coat which one has worn for a long time. It is a decided step. Of course we all know that time goes on as fast when its progress is unmarked as when it is noted. And each day that the coat went on was an onward stage as truly as the day when the coat went off ; but in this world we must take things as they are to our feeling : and there is something that very strongly appeals to our feeling in a decided beginning or a decided ending.

Do not smile, thoughtless people, at the poor old maid who persists in retaining some youthful fashion. You cannot know how much farther away that change would make her days of childhood seem: how much more remote and dim and faint it would make the little life, the face, the voice of the young brother or sister that died when they both were children together. Do not fancy that it is mere personal vanity which prompts that clinging to apparent youth: feelings which are gentle, pure, and estimable may protest against any change from the old familiar way. Do not smile at the phrases of the house when there are gray-headed *boys*, and *girls* on the lower side of forty-five: it would be a terrible sacrifice, it would make a terrible change, to give up the old names. You thoughtless young people are ready to deride Mr. Smith when he appears in his new wig. You do not think how, when poor Smith went to Truefitt's to get it, he had many thoughts of the long-departed mother, whom he remembers dimly on her sick-bed smoothing down her little boy's hair, thick enough then. And when you see Mr. Robinson puffing up the hill with purple face and labouring breath, do you think that poor Robinson does not remember the days when he was the best runner at school? Perhaps he tells you at considerable length about those days. Well, listen patiently: some day you may be telling long stories too. There is a peculiar sadness in thinking of exertions of body or mind to which we were once equal, but to which we are not equal now. You remember Swift, conscious that the 'decay at the top' had begun, bursting into tears as he read one of his early works, and exclaiming, 'Heavens, what a genius I had when I wrote that!' What is there more touching than the picture of poor Sir Walter, wheeled like a child in a chair through

the rooms at Abbotsford, and suddenly exclaiming, 'Come, this is sad idleness,' and insisting on beginning to dictate a new tale, in which the failing powers of the great magician appeared so sadly, that large as its marketable value would have been, it never was suffered to appear in print? Probably the sense of enfeebled faculties is a sadder thing than the sense of diminished physical power. Probably Sir Isaac Newton, in his latter days, when he sat down to his own mathematical demonstrations, and could not understand them or follow them, felt more bitterly the wear of advancing time than the gray-headed Highlander sitting on a stone at his cottage door in the sunshine, and telling you how, long ago, he could breast the mountain with the speed of a deer: or than the crippled soldier, who leans upon his crutch, and tells how, many years ago, that shaky old hand cut down the French cuirassier. But in either case it is a sad thing to think of exertions once put forth, and work once done, which could not be done or put forth now. Change for the worse is always a sorrowful thing. And the aged man, in the respect of physical power, and the capacity for intellectual exertion, has 'seen better days.' You do not like to think that in any respect you are falling off. You are not pleased at being told that ten years ago you wrote a plainer hand or spoke in a rounder voice. It is mortifying to find that whereas you could once walk at five miles an hour, you can now accomplish no more than three and a half. Now, in a hundred ways, at every turn, and by a host of little wounding facts, we are compelled to feel as we grow old that we are falling off. As the complexion roughens, as the hair grows thin, as we come to stoop, as we blow tremendously if we attempt to run, the man of no more than middle age is conscious of a bodily decadence.

And advancing years make the wise man sadly conscious of a mental decadence too. Let us be thankful that if physical and intellectual decline must come at a certain stage of growing old, there are respects in which, so long as we live, we may have the comfort of thinking that we are growing better. The higher nature may daily be reaching a nobler development ; when ' heart and flesh faint and fail,' when the clay tenement is turning frail and shattered, the better part within may show in all moral grace as but a little lower than the angels. Age need not necessarily be ' dark and unlovely,' as Ossian says it is ; and the conviction that in some respect, that in the most important of all respects, we are growing better, tends mightily to strip age of that sense of falling off which is the bitterest thing about it. And as the essential nature of growing old ;—its essence is a sad thing ;—lies in the sense of decadence, the conviction that in almost anything we are gaining ground has a wonderful power to enable us cheerfully to grow old. A man will contentedly grow fatter, balder, and puffier, if he feels assured that he is pushing on to eminence at the bar or in politics : and if he takes his seat upon the wool-sack even at the age of seventy-five, though he might now seek in vain to climb the trees he climbed in youth, or to play at leapfrog as then, still he is conscious that his life on the whole has been a progress ; that he is on the whole better now than he was in those days which were his best days physically ; that to be Lord Chancellor, albeit a venerable one, is, as the world goes, a more eminent thing than to be the gayest and most active of midshipmen. And so on the whole he is content to grow old, because he feels that in growing old he has not on the whole been coming down hill.

The supremely mortifying thing is, to feel that

the physical decadence which comes with growing old, is not counterbalanced by any improvement whatsoever. We shall not mind much about growing less agile and less beautiful, if we think that we are growing wiser and better. Make us feel that we are better in something, and we shall be content to be worse in many things ; but it is miserable to think that in all things we are falling off, or even in all things standing still. A man would be very much mortified to think that at fifty he did not write materially better sermons, essays, or articles than he did at five-and-twenty. In many things he knows the autumn of life is a falling off from its spring-time. He has ceased to dance : his voice quavers abominably when he tries to sing ; he has no fancy now for climbing hills, or for walks of forty miles a day. Perhaps deeper wrinkles have been traced by time on the heart than on the forehead, and the early freshness of feeling is gone. But surely in mellowed experience, in sober and sound views of things, in tempered expectations, in patience, in sympathy, in kindly charity, in insight into God's ways and dealings, he is better now a thousand times than he was then. He has worked his way through the hectic stage in which even able and thoughtful men fancy that Byron is the greatest poet. A sounder judgment and a severer taste direct him now ; in all things, in short, that make the essence of the manly nature, he is a better and farther advanced man than he ever was before. The physical nature says, by many little signs, WE ARE GOING DOWN HILL ; the spiritual nature testifies, by many noble gains and acquirements, WE ARE GOING ONWARD AND UPWARD ! It seems to me that the clergyman's state of feeling must be a curious one, who, on a fine Sunday morning, when he is sixty, can take out of his drawer a

sermon which he wrote at five-and-twenty, and go and preach it with perfect approval and without the alteration of a word. It is somewhat mortifying, no doubt, to look at a sermon which you wrote seven or eight years since, and which you then thought brilliant eloquence, and to find that in your present judgment it is no better than tawdry fustian. But still, my friend, even though you grudge to find that you must throw the sermon aside and preach it no more, are you not secretly pleased at this proof how much your mind has grown in these years? It is pleasant to think that you have not been falling off, not standing still. The wings of your imagination are somewhat clipped indeed, and your style has lost something of that pith which goes with want of consideration. Some youthful judges may think that you have sadly fallen off; but you are content in the firm conviction that you have vastly improved. It was veal then: it is beef now. I remember hearing with great interest how a venerable professor of fourscore wrote in the last few weeks of his life a little course of lectures on a certain debated point of theology. He had outgrown his former notions upon the subject. The old man said his former lectures upon it did not do him justice. Was it not a pleasant sight—the aged tree bearing fruit to the last? How it must have pleased and soothed the good man, amid many advancing infirmities, to persuade himself (justly or unjustly), that in the most important respect he was going onward still!

It is indeed a pleasant sight to kindly on-lookers, and it is a sustaining and consoling thing to the old man himself, when amid physical decadence there is intellectual growth. But this is not a common thing. As a general rule, it cannot be doubted that, intellectually, we top the summit sometime before

fourscore, and begin to go downhill. I do not wish to turn my essays into sermons, or to push upon my readers things more fitly addressed to my congregation on Sundays: still, let me say that in the thought that Growing Old implies at last a decay both mental and bodily, and that unrelieved Going Down is a very sad thing to feel or to see, I find great comfort in remembering that as regards the best and noblest of all characteristics, the old man may be progressing to the last. In all the beautiful qualities which most attract the love and reverence of those around, and which fit for purer and happier company than can be found in this world, the aged man or woman may be growing still. In the last days, indeed, it may be ripening rather than growing: mellowing, not expanding. But to do *that* is to 'grow in grace.' And doubtless the yellow harvest-field in September is an advance upon the fresh green blades of June. You may like better to look upon the wheat that is progressing towards ripeness; but the wheat which has reached ripeness is not a falling off. The stalks will not bend now, without breaking: you rub the heads, and the yellow chaff that wraps the grain, crumbles off in dust. But it is beyond a question that there you see wheat at its best.

Still, not forgetting this, we must all feel it sad to see human beings as they grow old, retrograding in material comforts and advantages. It is a mournful thing to see: a man growing poorer as he is growing older, or losing position in any way. If it were in my power, I would make all barristers above sixty judges. They ought to be put in a situation of dignity and independence. You don't like to go into a court of justice, and there behold a thin, grayheaded counsel, somewhat shaken in nerve,

looking rather frail, battling away with a full-blooded, confident, hopeful, impudent fellow, five-and-twenty years his junior. The youthful, big-whiskered, roaring, and bullying advocate is sure to be held in much the greater estimation by attorneys' clerks. The old gentleman's day is over ; but with lessening practice and disappointed hopes he must drive on at the bar still. I wish I were a Chief Justice, that by special deference and kindness of manner, I might daily soothe somewhat the feelings of that aging man. But it is especially in the case of the clergy that one sees the painful sight of men growing poorer as they are growing older. I think of the case of a clergyman who at his first start was rather fortunate : who gets a nice parish at six-and-twenty : I mean a parish which is a nice one for a man of six-and-twenty : and who never gets any other preferment, but in that parish grows old. Don't we all know how pretty and elegant everything was about him at first : how trim and weedless were his garden and shrubbery : how rosy his carpets, how airy his window-curtains, how neat though slight all his furniture : how graceful, merry, and nicely-dressed the young girl who was his wife : how (besides hosts of parochial improvements) he devised numberless little changes about his dwelling : rustic bowers, moss-houses, green mounts, labyrinthine walks, fantastically-trimmed yews, root-bridges over the little stream ? But as his family increased, his income stood still. It was hard enough work to make the ends meet even at first, though young hearts are hopeful : but with six or seven children, with boys who must be sent to college with girls who must be educated as ladies, with the prices of all things ever increasing, with multiplying bills from the shoemaker, tailor, dress-maker ; the poor parson grows yearly poorer. The

rosy face of the young wife has now deep lines of care: the weekly sermon is dull and spiritless: the parcel of books comes no more: the carpets grow threadbare but are not replaced: the furniture becomes creaky and rickety: the garden walks are weedy: the bark peels off the rustic verandah: the moss-house falls much over to one side: the friends, far away, grow out of all acquaintance. The parson himself, once so precise in dress, is shabby and untidy now; and his wife's neat figure is gone: the servants are of inferior class; perhaps the burden of hopeless debt presses always with its dull dead weight upon the poor clergyman's heart. There is little spring in him to push off the invasion of fatigue and infection, and he is much exposed to both; and should he be taken away, who shall care for the widow and the fatherless, losing at once their head, their home, their means of living? Even you, non-clerical reader, know precisely what I describe: hundreds have seen it: and such will agree with me when I say that there is no sadder sight than that of a clergyman, with a wife and children, growing poor as he is growing old. Oh, that I had the fortune of John Jacob Astor, that I might found, once for all, a fund that should raise for ever above penury and degradation the widows and the orphans of rectory, vicarage, parsonage, and manse!

And even when the old man has none depending upon him for bread, to be provided from his lessening store, there is something inexpressibly touching and mournful in the spectacle of an old man who must pinch and screw. You do not mind a bit about a hopeful young lad having to live in humble lodgings up three pairs of stairs; or about such a one having a limited number of shirts, stockings, and boots, and needing to be very careful and saving as to his clothes;

or about his having very homely shaving-things, or hair brushes which are a good deal worn out. The young fellow can stand all that: it is all quite right: let him bear the yoke in his youth: he may look forward to better days. Nor does there seem in the nature of things any very sad inconsistency in the idea of a young lad carefully considering how long his boots or greatcoat will last, or with what *minimum* of shirts he can manage to get on. But I cannot bear the thought of a gray-headed old man, with shaky hand and weary limb, sitting down in his lonely lodging, and meditating on such things as these: counting his pocket-handkerchiefs, and suspecting that one is stolen; or looking ruefully at a boot which has been cut where the upper leather joins the sole. Let not the aged man be worried with such petty details! Of course, my reader, I know as well as you do, that very many aged people must think of these little things to the last. All I say is, that if I had the ordering of things, no man or woman above sixty should ever know the want of money. And whenever I find a four-leaved shamrock, *that* is the very first arrangement I shall make. Possibly I may extend the arrangement further, and provide that no honest married man or woman shall ever grow early old through wearing care. What a little end is sometimes the grand object of a human being's strivings through many weeks and months! I sat down the other day in a poor chamber, damp with much linen drying upon crossing lines. There dwells a solitary woman, an aged and infirm woman, who supports herself by washing. For months past her earnings have averaged three shillings a week. Out of that sum she must provide food and raiment; she must keep in her poor fire; and she must pay a rent of nearly three pounds a-year. 'It is hard work, sir,' she said: 'it costs me

many a thought getting together the money to pay my rent.' And I could see well, that from the year's beginning to its end, the thing always uppermost in that poor old widow's waking thoughts, was the raising of that great incubus of a sum of money. A small end, you would say, for the chief thoughts of an immortal being! Don't you feel, gay young reader, for that fellow creature, to whom a week has been a success, if at its close she can put by a few half-pence towards meeting the term-day? Would you not like to enrich her, to give her a light heart, by sending her a half-sovereign? If you would, you may send it to me.\*

It is well, I have said, for a man who is growing old, if he is able to persuade himself that though physically going downhill, he is yet in some respect progressing. For if he can persuade himself that he is progressing in any one thing, he will certainly believe that he is advancing on the whole. Still, it must be said, that the self-complacency of old gentlemen is sometimes amusing (where not irritating) to their juniors. I have heard an elderly man of fair average ability, declare in sober earnest, that had he gone to the bar, he 'had no hesitation in saying' that he would have been Chancellor or Chief Justice of England. I have witnessed an elderly man whom the late Sir Robert Peel never saw or heard of, declare that Sir Robert had borrowed from him his idea of abolishing the Corn-laws. I have heard an elderly mercantile man, who had gone the previous day to look at a small property which was for sale, remark that

\* I cannot deny myself the pleasure of recording that for many days after the above paragraph was first published (in *Fraser's Magazine* for June, 1860), there arrived by each morning's post little sums sent by all kinds of people, in distant parts of Britain; which made the poor widow quite rich.

he had no doubt that by this time all the country was aware of what he had been doing. With the majority of elderly men, you can hardly err on the side of over-estimating the amount of their vanity. They will receive with satisfaction a degree of flattery which would at once lead a young man to suspect that you were making a fool of him. There is no doubt that if a man be foolish at all, he always grows more foolish as he grows older. The most outrageous conceit of personal beauty, intellectual prowess, weight in the country, superiority in the regard of horses, wine, pictures, grapes, potatoes, poultry, pigs, and all other possessions, which I have ever seen, has been in the case of old men. And I have known commonplace old women, to whom if you had ascribed queenly beauty and the intellect of Shakespeare, they would have thought you were doing them simple justice. The truth appears to be, not that the vanity of elderly folk is naturally bigger than that of their juniors, but that it is not mown down in that unsparing fashion to which the vanity of their juniors is subjected. If an old man tells you that the abolition of the Slave-trade originated in his back-parlour, you may think him a vain, silly old fellow, but you do not tell him so. Whereas if a young person makes an exhibition of personal vanity, he is severely ridiculed. He is taught sharply that, however great may be his estimate of himself, it will not do to show it. 'Shut up, old fellow, and don't make a fool of yourself,' you say to a friend of your own age, should he begin to vapour. But when the aged pilgrim begins to boast, you feel bound to listen with apparent respect. And the result is, that the old gentleman fancies you believe all he tells you.

Not unfrequently, when a man has grown old to

that degree that all his powers of mind and body are considerably impaired, there is a curious and touching mood which comes before an almost sudden breaking-down into decrepitude. It is a mood in which the man becomes convinced that he is not so very old ; that he has been mistaken in fancying that the autumn of life was so far advanced with him ; and that all he has to do in order to be as active and vigorous as he ever was, is to make some great change of scene and circumstances ; to go back, perhaps to some place where he had lived many years before, and there, as Dr. Johnson expresses it, to 'recover youth in the fields where he once was young.' The aged clergyman thinks that if he were now to go to the parish he was offered forty years since, it would bring back those days again : he would be the man he was then. Of course, in most cases, such a feeling is like the leaping up of the flame before it goes out ; it is an impulse as natural and as unreasonable as that which makes the dying man insist within an hour of his death on being lifted from his bed and placed in his easy chair, and then he will be all right. But sometimes there really is in human feeling and life something analogous to the Martinmas summer in the year. Sometimes after we had made up our mind that we had grown old, it flashes upon us that we are not so old after all : there is a real rejuvenescence. Happy days promote the feeling. You know that as autumn draws on, there come days on which it is summer or winter just as the weather chances to be fair or foul. And so there is a stage of life in which it depends mainly on a man's surroundings whether he shall be old or young. If unsuccessful, overburdened, overdriven, lightly esteemed, with much depending upon him, and little aid or sympathy, a man may feel old at thirty-five.

But if there still be a house where he is one of *the boys* : if he be living among his kindred and those who have grown up along with him : if he be still unmarried : if he have not lived in many different places, or in any place very far away : if he have not known many different modes of life, or worked in many different kinds of work : then at thirty-five he may feel very young. There are men who at that age have never known what it is to stand upon their own legs in life, and to act upon their own responsibility. They have always had some one to tell them what to do. I can imagine that towards the close of the ten years which Pisistratus Caxton spent in Australia, far away from his parents and his home, and day by day obliged to decide and manage for himself, he had begun to feel tolerably old. But when he came back again, and found his father and mother hardly changed in aspect ; and found the chairs and sofas, and beds, and possibly even the carpets, looking much as he had left them ; those ten years, a vast expanse while they were passing over, would close up into something very small in the perspective ; and he would feel with a sudden exultation that he was quite a young fellow yet.

It is wonderful what a vast amount of work a man may go through without its telling much upon him : and how many years he may live without feeling perceptibly older at their close. The years were long in passing ; they look like nothing when past. If you were to go away, my friend, from London or Edinburgh, and live for five or six years in the centre of the Libyan desert ; or in an island of the South Seas ; or at an up-country station in India ; there would be many evenings in those years on which you would feel as though you were separated by ages from the scenes and friends you knew. It would

seem like a century since you came away : it would seem like an impossibility that you should ever be back again in the old place, looking and feeling much in the old way. But at length, travelling on week after week, you come home again. You find your old companions looking just as before, and the places you knew are little changed. Miss Smith, whom you remember a blooming young woman before you went out, is a blooming young woman still, and probably singing the same songs which you remember her singing then. Why, it rushes upon you, you have been a very short time away ! you are not a day older ; it is a mere nothing to go out sperm-whaling for four or five years, or to retire for that period to a parish in the *Ultima Thule*. Life, after all, is so long, that you may cut a good large slice out of the earlier years of it without making it perceptibly less. When Macaulay returned from India after his years there, I have no doubt he felt this. And the general principle is true, that almost any outward condition or any state of feeling, after it has passed away, appears to us to have lasted a very much shorter time than it did when it was passing : and it leaves us with the conviction that we are not nearly so old as we had fancied while it was passing. And the rejuvenescence is sometimes not merely in feeling, but in fact and in appearance. You remember that pleasing touch of nature in the new series of *Friends in Council*, when Milverton, after having talked of himself as a faded widower, and appeared before us as one devoted to grave philosophic research, falls in love with a girl of two-and-twenty, and discovers that after all he is not so old. And I suppose it would be a pleasant discovery to any man, after he had fancied for years that the romantic interest had for him fled from life, to find that music could still thrill through him as of yore,

and that the capacity of feeling was not at all obliterated. As Festus says—

Rouse thee, heart !  
Bow of my life, thou yet art full of spring !  
My quiver still hath many purposes.

You may find among the *Twice-told Tales* of Nathaniel Hawthorne a most exquisite one called *The Fountain of Youth*, in which we are told of three old gentlemen and an old lady, who were so enchanted by tasting a draught which brought back the exhilaration of youth for half-an-hour (though it led them likewise to make very great fools of themselves), that they determined they would wander over the world till they should find that wondrous fountain, and then quaff its waters morning, noon, and night. And Thomas Moore, in one of his sweetest songs, warms for a minute from cold glitter into earnestness, as he declares his belief that no gains which advancing years can bring with them are any compensation for the lightheartedness and the passionate excitement which they take away.

Give me back, give me back the wild freshness of morning,—  
Its smiles and its tears are worth evening's best light.

And indeed it is to be admitted that in a life whose poetry is drawn from the domain of passion and imagination, the poetry does pass away as imagination flags and the capacity of emotion dries up with advancing time. But the true philosopher is Mr. Hawthorne. *He* shows us how the exhilaration, the *wild freshness* of the season when life is at blood-heat, partakes of the nature of intoxication; and he leaves us with the sober conviction that the truly wise man may well be thankful when he has got safely through that feverish season of temptation and of folly. Let us be glad if our bark has come (even a little battered)

through the Maelstrom, by the Scylla and Charybdis, and is now sailing quietly upon a calm and tranquil sea. Wait till you are a little older, youthful reader, and you will understand that truth and soberness (how fitly linked together) are noble things. If you are a good man—let me say it at once, a Christian man—your latter days are better a thousand times than those early ones after which superficial and worldly folk whimper. The capacity of excitement is much lessened ; the freshness of feeling and heart are much gone ; though not, of necessity, so very much. You begin, like the old grandmother in that beautiful poem of Mr. Tennyson, 'to be a little weary ;' the morning air is hardly so exhilarating, nor the frosty winter afternoon ; the snowdrops and primroses come back, and you are disappointed that so little of the vernal joy comes with them ; you go and stand by the grave of your young sister on the anniversary of the day when she died, and you wonder that you have come to *feel* so little where once you felt so much. You preach the sermons you once preached with emotion so deep that it was contagious ; but now the corresponding feeling does not come ; you give them coldly ; you are mortified at the contrast between the warmth there is in the old words, and the chilliness with which you speak them. You hear of the death of a dear friend, and you are vexed that you can take it so coolly. But oh ! my brother, aging like myself, do you not know, in sober earnest, that for such losses as these, other things have brought abundant recompense ? What a meaning there is now to you in the words of St. Austin—'Thou madst us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee !' You are beginning to understand that St. Paul was right, when (even in the face of the fact that inexperienced youth is proverbially the most

hopeful) he declared that in the truest sense 'experience worketh hope.' What a calm there is here! Passion is no longer the disturbing force it once was. Your eyes are no longer blinded to the truth of things by the glittering mists of fancy. You do your duty quietly and hopefully. You can bear patiently with the follies and the expectations of youth. I say it with the firmest assurance of the truth of what I say, that as he grows old, the wise man has great reason to thank God that he is no longer young. Truth and soberness are well worth all they cost. You won't make a terrific fool of yourself any more. Campbell was not a philosopher, and possibly he was only half in earnest when he wrote the following verse; but many men, no longer young, will know how true it is:—

Hail, welcome tide of life, where no tumultuous billows roll,  
How wondrous to myself appears this halcyon calm of soul!  
The wearied bird blown o'er the deep would sooner quit its shore,  
Than I would cross the gulf again that Time has brought me o'er!

The dead are the only people that never grow old. There was something typical in the arrestment of time in the case of the youthful miner, of whom we have already spoken. Your little brother or sister that died long ago, remains in death and in remembrance the same young thing for ever. It is fourteen years this evening since the writer's sister left this world. She was fifteen years old then—she is fifteen years old yet. I have grown older since then by fourteen years, but she has never changed as they advanced; and if God spares me to fourscore, I never shall think of her as other than the youthful creature she faded. The other day I listened as a poor woman told of the death of her first-born child. He was two years old. She had a small washing-green, across which was stretched a rope that came in the

middle close to the ground. The boy was leaning on the rope, swinging backwards and forwards, and shouting with delight. The mother went into her cottage and lost sight of him for a minute; and when she returned, the little man was lying across the rope dead. It had got under his chin: he had not sense to push it away; and he was suffocated. The mother told me, and I believe truly, that she had never been the same person since; but the thing which mainly struck me was, that though it is eighteen years since then, she thought of her child as an infant of two years yet: it is a little child she looks for to meet her at the gate of the Golden City. Had her child lived he would have been twenty years old now: he died, and he is only two: he is two yet: he will never be more than two. The little rosy face of that morning, and the little half-articulate voice, would have been faintly remembered by the mother had they gradually died into boyhood and manhood; but that day stereotyped them: they remain unchanged.

Have you seen, my reader, the face that had grown old in life grow young after death? The expression of many years since, lost for long, comes out startlingly in the features, fixed and cold? Every one has seen it: and it is sometimes strange how rapidly the change takes place. The marks of pain fade out, and with them the marks of age. I once saw an aged woman die. She had borne sharp pain for many days with the endurance of a martyr; she had to bear sharp pain to the very last. The features were tense and rigid with suffering; they remained so while life remained. It was a beautiful sight to see the change that took place in the very instant of dissolution. The features, sharp for many days with

pain, in that instant recovered the old aspect of quietude which they had borne in health: the tense, tight look was gone. You saw the signs of pain go out. You felt that all suffering was over. It was no more of course than the working of physical law: but in that case it seemed as if there was a farther meaning conveyed. It was hardly possible to look on the countenance, so suffering the one moment, so quiet and calm the next, without remembering words which tell us, concerning the country into which the Christian enters in the instant of his departure, that 'THERE shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; *neither shall there be any more pain.*' And so it seems to me when the young look comes back on the departed Christian's face. Gone, it seems to say, where the progress of time shall no longer bring age or decay. Gone where there are beings whose life may be reckoned by centuries, but in whom life is fresh and young, and always will be so. Close the aged eyes! Fold the aged hands in rest. Their owner is no longer old!

1861.)

V.

AMONG SOUTH-WESTERN CATHEDRALS.

I AM sitting, quite alone, in a shabby, comfortless little room, dimly lighted by two candles, not of wax. The room has a low ceiling: the walls are covered with a very ugly paper. The fire is small, and will not be made larger. The room is on the level of the street: and just outside, close at hand, there is a noise of loud and unattractive laughing. This is a little inn, in the chief street of a little town. I have had dinner: the meal was solitary. The dinner was extremely bad: and the hour at which it came plainly appeared to the landlord a very late one. I have written several letters, and dipped into a volume of dreary theology, the sole volume in the room. An hour must pass before one can well go to bed: for it is only nine o'clock. So let me begin a faithful record of events which happened in a period reaching from Monday morning to Saturday night, early in this month of October.

At six o'clock this evening, I was walking along a gravelled path, leading through fields, to the west. The grass was very rich and green: far more so than I am used to see. There was a magnificent sunset: the air was bright blue overhead, but somewhat thicker in the western horizon, where all was glowing red. Around, everywhere, noble trees; and the scene was shut

in by wavy hills. A solemn bell struck the hour, in deep tones. Look out towards the sound ; and there, in the twilight, you may see three massive square towers. Let us go on a little, and we approach an ancient dwelling, surrounded by a wall and a moat. The wall is ivied : the moat is broad : the water clear as crystal, and not deep. Two swans, who are floating about on it, by turning themselves up in an ungraceful manner, can reach the ground with their bills. The water comes brawling into the moat by a little cascade ; and it escapes by three sluices, on different sides of the large square space it encloses. Pollard elms of great age, the leaves thick and green as at mid-summer, are on the further side of the broad walk which here skirts the water. This moat was made five hundred years ago. Pass on, under an ancient archway : pass into a great square expanse of green grass, with many fine trees. The grand cathedral rises in the midst : all round the Green (that is the name here) are antique houses. There is a charming deanery : you enter it by passing under an arch, and find yourself in an inner court, quaint and ivy-grown. No words can express the glory and quietness of the place : for this is the ancient city of Wells, amid the hills of Somersetshire. The moated dwelling is the episcopal palace. There dwelt holy Bishop Ken : and there Dr. Kidder, who was found willing to take the place from which that good man was cast out, was killed by the falling upon him of a stack of chimneys.

Vainly should I seek to express the beauty of the scenery, or the magnificence of the Gothic churches, which I have seen in these last few days. There is no country in the world to travel in, after all, like England. And though this be the tenth of October, you might have forgotten, for days past, that it was not summer.

Bright and warm has been the sunshine: thick and green the trees; though sometimes there is the crisp rustle which follows the foot stepping on fallen leaves. Yet somehow the quiet of a cathedral close is inconsistent with the solitary feeling of a little-travelled stranger: one ought to feel at home to duly be aware of the genius of the place. Far, to-night, is the writer from his home: and no doubt a little lonely in the strange region.

Let me look back on what I have seen this week: it has been a great deal to one accustomed to quiet, unvaried life. Sunday is beyond question the first day of the week: what passed on that day need not be recorded. On Monday morning, in a thick fog, I entered a little steamer at the landing-stage at Liverpool. The steamer carried many human beings to a place on the Cheshire side of the Mersey, named Rock Ferry. There we embarked in another steamer: and went on, out into the river: till there loomed ahead a huge shape, quite familiar, though never seen before. It was the *Great Eastern*: and up its side did the writer go, following the steps of its captain, who has won a name in history. It made a Scotsman proud, to look at the brave, quiet, sensible Scottish face, which reminded one a good deal of the portraits of George Stephenson. Well has Sir James Anderson earned the honour done him by his Queen. It must have been an awful charge, that great vessel, with her crew of five hundred and fifty men, and her historic burden of the Atlantic cable. You felt, looking at the man, with what implicit confidence you could have trusted to him in any emergency or danger. With great kindness and clearness he explained the machinery for paying out and picking up the cable. He told how on a very stormy night of pitchy darkness, he stood at the extremity of the stern beside the wheel over which

the cable was passing ; but could not see it. Only a faint phosphorescent point of light, a long way off, showed where the cable was entering the water. He told, with the vividness of reality, of the tedious endeavours to pick up the cable of the former year from where it lay three miles down at the bottom of the Atlantic. At last, standing on the prow, he heard a stir below, looked over, saw the cable fairly there above water ; ' and then,' said the gallant man in his quiet way, ' I was very thankful.' A thing to be wondered at was how the slender cord was able to turn all that complex apparatus of heavy wheels.

Good-bye to the *Great Eastern* and its brave commander ; and away from Birkenhead, by railway, in the bright sunshiny day. Not long, and there is not unfamiliar Chester : on, and Wrexham, with its grand and massive church tower. How these things impress the lover of Gothic who dwells in a country of churches of inexpressible trumperiness and shabbiness ! By Ruabon : leave on the right Llangollen, for Yarrow must remain unvisited to-day. Never were these eyes gladdened by the sight of a lovelier country. So to renowned Shrewsbury, on the famous Severn. Here let us stop for a little, and have a walk through the town. You pass from the railway station, under the shadow of an ancient castle : elevated a little, on the right, is a considerable Gothic edifice of red stone : if you ask what it is of the same man whom I asked, you will be told ' The College.' Then you may think of head-master Butler, who was made a bishop, and of Dr. Kennedy, quite as good a scholar, the head-master of to-day. Quaint old wooden houses : queer names of streets : one is called *Murivance*. Rapidly let the eyes be feasted : then back to the railway. On for a journey of two hours more. You must pass Ludlow unwillingly in the failing light : one cannot see every-

thing. Then, in the dark, Hereford is reached : the end of the day's pilgrimage. Proceed in an omnibus to the hotel : there you may have tea, accompanied by mutton chops. Afterwards you may go out and enjoy the sensation of being in a new city, among new men ; and in the starlight look at the cathedral. Cats, however, are the only creatures who see an edifice, or any other object, best in the dark.

Next day was a lovely summer day : nothing autumnal in the air, and hardly anything in the trees. Let us be up early, and have a good walk about the city before the hour of service. By the city flows the Wye, 'the babbling Wye.' From the bridge which crosses it you have a fine view of the cathedral and the palace : here and there, about the streets, antique houses of wood. At ten o'clock let us pass into the cathedral, under the great porch leading to the nave : let us enter an undistinguished name in the large volume which lies on a table to that end ; and, obeying the behests of the Dean and Chapter, drop into a box with a hole in the lid a great sum towards the complete restoration of the sacred building. And it is a noble church, nobly restored ; at least in so far as that has been done by Mr. George Gilbert Scott. Wyatt, unutterable Vandal, put up that execrable western front in place of a western tower and spire which fell. The floor is of tiles : the roof of the nave is illuminated : there is a magnificent rood screen : the choir is sacred to the clergy and those who perform the service : the congregation sit on rush-seated chairs in the nave. Pleasant it was to the writer, who seldom hears choral service now, when those whom he had seen enter their vestry a few minutes before as shabby little boys, came to their places in procession as surpliced choristers : twelve of them, with six singing men, making the double choir complete. The congregation was small :

one did not feel any want of a greater. The service was beautifully given: the music was severely simple: and how the noble praise thrilled through one to whom it can never grow common and cheap! Pleasant, too, to see the perfect propriety of demeanour among the choristers: it did not always use so to be in every cathedral church. There was an anthem, admirably sung. Let it be confessed, one thing revived the writer. Of another communion, because dwelling in another country and within the bounds of another national church, he felt, looking at the noble edifice and joining in the noble service, that for outward dignity and majesty, we in the North have nothing to compare with this: and he felt decidedly taken down and humbled. But in a little he was cheered. That morning there was a sermon. Ah! what a poor sermon! Yes, at least we can beat *this*, he thought: and beat it by uncounted degrees. A church which makes the sermon too much the great thing in the worship of God, is likely at all events to give you good sermons. And though the South may have its good preacher here and there, yet sure it is that the average preaching of the North, in many a seedy little country church, is just as much better than that brief but unutterably tedious sermon at Hereford Cathedral, as Hereford Cathedral is better than the seedy little country church.

Walk all about the cathedral: all about the close. Deanery, palace, fine trees, Wye: grammar-school, pleasant walks by river side. Pervade the town: already it has grown quite familiar. And as day declines, depart by railway to Gloucester, distant little more than an hour: studying on the way the photographs of Hereford, city and cathedral, which you may buy at various shops.

Passing through the lovely English landscape, at last you may look out on the right: there is the city

of Gloucester: there the great square tower of the cathedral. Hasten to the *Bell*: let the luggage be left; we are just in time for afternoon service. Again the train of choristers: here the music was much more florid than at Hereford, and (so it seemed) not so careful and good. The church is a noble one: the eastern window, which has a curious gray sheen, is as large as any in England. But after trim Hereford, the church had a neglected look. In some places, plaster has dropped from the roof: plaster which should never have been there. And after brilliant encaustic pavement, the rude floor of stone in choir and sanctuary looked poor. Led by an intelligent verger, let us examine the great edifice: the strange, rude crypt: the beautiful cloisters. Let us ascend to the triforium and enjoy the varied views of choir and nave thence obtained. Here is buried the murdered Edward II.: there is a shrine of the richest decorated tabernacle work: a recumbent statue of the poor monarch which must be a likeness; there is inexpressible pathos in that beautiful but sorrowful face. Coming forth from the cathedral, let us pervade the close. It is a quiet and charming place. The deanery, built up to the west end of the church, is striking: the palace, on the north side of the choir, seems an ambitious architectural failure. Beautiful is the turf and rich the shrubbery at the east end of the choir: quaint and pretty various ancient houses in which cathedral authorities and functionaries dwell. Passing out of the close towards the west under an archway, you come on the statue of Bishop Hooper, erected on the spot where he was burnt.

Various shops in Gloucester are rich in photographs of cathedrals, near and distant. If you walk down towards the Severn, you will find yourself amid the bustle of a considerable port. Docks of no small

size, and abundant shipping, form a scene in contrast to the quiet one just left behind. But by half-past six it has grown dark : so to the *Bell*, and have dinner.

The next day was Wednesday : a beautiful warm sunshiny morning. Be early afoot : pervade the city : walk about the close. Never seen till yesterday, how familiar it looks to-day ; and we sadly part from it as from an old friend. But we have far to go to-day ; and at 11.15 A.M. again the railway train. An hour of rapid running, without a stop, through rich green fields : Berkeley Castle is off there to the right : and here is busy Bristol. The cathedral here is poor ; but there is St. Mary Redcliffe, the most magnificent of all parish churches, superior to many cathedrals. Yet there is lacking the environing close : the grand church is surrounded by dirty streets. Here Chatterton, 'the marvellous boy,' spent the greater part of his feverish life ; in a room in the tower he declared he found the Rowley manuscripts. To the train again ; by Bath, Westbury (near which on a hill to the left is a large and quite symmetrical White Horse on the hill-side, made by cutting away the turf down to the chalk), and Witham. If you are fond of changing carriages, you may have enough of it here. At length, as the sun is declining in glory, you reach that paragon of cathedral cities in which I am writing : beautiful Wells.

I have little doubt that if one were to live at Wells for several months, and still more for several years, the quiet little city would come to look and to feel like anywhere else. But now, to a stranger, it is 'an unsubstantial, fairy place.' Hard by is the vale of Avalon ; and the ruins of Glastonbury : all round the Mendip Hills. And though England can boast of some bigger cathedrals, nowhere will you find one of more exquisite beauty. Nowhere, too, will you

find the ancient cathedral seat so much like what it was in ancient days. I shall not be tempted into any architectural details: all I say is, Go and see the place, and you will be all but intoxicated with the loveliest forms of Gothic beauty.

Here I ceased for the night, in a sort of bewilderment. Next morning was a cloudy one, with flying gleams of sunshine. Long before service, let us enter the magnificent church and gaze at it. It is in exquisite preservation. The light colour of the stone of which the shafts are made adds to their airy grace. The four great piers at the intersection of the transepts threatened to yield under the pressure of the centre tower; and their bearing power was increased by three curious inverted arches, the like of which I believe you will not see in England. It was a graceful disguising of a defect: but of course they would be better away. The stalls in the choir are of stone: an unusual material, but the effect is beautiful.

It is near the hour of morning service; let us take our place. Carelessly the choir straggles in; never were arrangements more slovenly. The little boys come in, not in procession, but in a huddled heap; in a little, by himself, the clergyman who is to perform the service. Then the dean and the canon in residence come in a free and easy way: two or three of the singing men rush hastily after them: two singing men scuttle in after service has begun. It was a painful contrast: the noble church and the ostentatiously irreverent arrangements.\* The music was good after the choir got themselves settled to their work. But if I were Dean of Wells, there should be a thorough turn-over, and that without a day's delay.

\* Writing in 1885, after visiting Dean Plumptre at Wells, Dr. Boyd remarks: 'How careful and reverent the service, compared with my remembrance of nineteen years before.'

Worship over, let us see every corner of the church : then climb a winding stair in a transept wall ; walk along the stone roof of the transept, the lofty wooden one still far above your head. Climb, higher and higher, till you come out to daylight on the top of the great central tower. The first thing that will strike you is not the grand prospect : it is the rusty creaking of the four weathercocks, one on each pinnacle : the sound is eerie. Look round. A richly-wooded green country, with undulating hills. To the west, the vale of Avalon : that pyramidal hill is Glastonbury Tor, three miles off. Below, on the left hand, the cloisters : beyond, the palace, with its moat, and expanse of green sward. On the other side the deanery, and the vicar's close, with a bridge leading from it across the road into the cathedral. The country round seems to be all grass. One turret of the tower has a bell whereon a hammer strikes the hour, being pulled by a wire from below. The cloisters have perpendicular tracery. In the middle space there is an ancient yew. An amphitheatre of hills closes in all the scene. Oh ! hard-working Scotland, where no one, except a few folk of political influence, is paid without toiling rigidly for it, when will you have such retreats for learning and religion, combined with very little to do ?

I esteem Wells as the climax of my little journey, though I went next to Salisbury. I did not leave Wells, till I had gone over the beautiful church of St. Cuthbert, which is partially restored. Not completely, because the dissenters will not agree to a church rate. I thought of the Cathedral, and the vale of Avalon, and could but hold up the hands of wonder, and exclaim 'Dissenters here !' Two hours and a half by railway to Salisbury. Hasten to the close : let the most intelligent of vergers conduct you through the famous church. Dare we say, Disappointed ?

I do not allude to the horrible arrangement of the old monuments, one in each bay of the nave, on the floor, midway between the piers ; nor to the stalls of shabby deal, painted brown ; nor to the ugly way in which the Lady Chapel has been thrown into the choir. Even looking at the vast building, with its double transept, and its spire, the loftiest in England, I could but vaguely say, that I have seen cathedrals which impressed me infinitely more. Long neglect laid its hand on the great church, till Bishop Denison took it in hand. Much work is going on now : the west front is concealed by scaffolding, and great saws are cutting stone at its base: but there is a vast deal yet to do. Rather to undo. The execrable hand of Wyatt has been here, obliterating and destroying. The spire, of near 400 feet, is a good deal off the perpendicular ; at the capstone it is two feet to the south and near a foot and half to the west. No further deviation has occurred for many years. The close is large. The ancient deanery is opposite the west front of the church ; the palace stands within grounds of moderate extent near the Lady Chapel.

Two miles from Salisbury is Bemerton, hallowed by the memory of George Herbert : a mile further towards the west is Wilton, where a beautiful Byzantine church was built a few years ago by the late Mr. Sydney Herbert. One regrets that so much cost should have been lavished on a building of an inferior style ; however splendid a specimen of that style it may be. And eight miles from the graceful cathedral of a somewhat wearisome perfection, you will find the grandest specimen of the rudest of all architecture. There, in the plain, is mysterious Stonehenge : ‘awful memorial, but of whom we know not.’

Stay at the *White Hart*. In the evening, after dark, you may pervade the city, not without its bustle

and stir. Next day, as long as may be, saunter about the close, and look at the cathedral from all points of view. Again wander through its interior. I am mistaken if you do not depart, vaguely disappointed.

So to the never-failing train. Basingstoke, Farnborough, on the skirts of Aldershot camp; and in the gathering dark approach awful London: awful with its bulk and ceaseless whirl to such as dwell amid quiet scenes; awful with its contrasts of the greatest luxury and the most abject poverty. Here is Waterloo Station: enter the rapid Hansom. And, speeding this Saturday evening towards the place of sojourn, look back to Monday morning, and try to recall what has been beheld since then. You give it up, confused.

(1866.)

## VI.

### CHARLES KINGSLEY.\*

CHARLES KINGSLEY was born at Holne, in Devonshire, on June 12, 1819; and he died at Eversley on January 23, 1875, having lived seven months more than fifty-five years. An eager, anxious, hard-working, yet on the whole very happy life was contained in that period. He was preacher, parish-priest, politician, poet, novelist, historian, inspired teller of stories to the children: enthusiastic naturalist, architect and artist without building or painting. He was brave, impulsive, just, truthful, humorous, affectionate, beloved. He made his name known wherever the English language is read. He had his vehement traducers, most of whom knew nothing of him but from his writings: all who knew him and understood him were his loving friends. He had to *dree his weird* through years of suspicion, misrepresentation, and obloquy, for which he was himself in part responsible. Then came the bright time of success, professional eminence, and fame. And amid all these he died.

Though his life was one of little outward event, his inner history was remarkable: and his biography

\* *Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memoirs of his Life.* Edited by his Wife. Two volumes. London: Henry S. King & Co. 1877.

deserved to be written. It has been written, modestly and simply, by that noble and (let it be said) almost angelic woman to whom he was ever forward to say he owed all the good he had done in his life, and the happiness he had known. It need not be said that the story is told with perfect taste and with deep feeling. No doubt Mrs. Kingsley knew how great and good a man her husband was: but there is no exaggeration of the real goodness, ability, and varied usefulness of the man. It is not the mark he may have left on his generation that she dwells on most fondly; but rather the diligence of the parish-priest who brought new moral life into his parish, ministering day and night to the humblest; and the help he was enabled to render to many unknown friends in divers countries of the world, who had taken courage to write and ask the counsel of a stranger whose pages had brought light and strength to their perplexed and weary souls. Several of Kingsley's earlier works were first published in *Fraser's Magazine*: and eighteen or twenty years ago there were those who looked for the letters C. K. appended to charming essays, and occasional little poems, which appeared in its pages. He had no dearer friend than John Parker, who then conducted *Fraser*, and whose heart was in his magazine and his friends who wrote in it. It was under John Parker's roof that the writer first met Kingsley, and speedily learned to feel towards him as all who knew him felt: it was in John Parker's company that the writer first visited Eversley Rectory, and saw what Kingsley was in his beautiful and happy home. Some tribute to Kingsley is becoming here: \* and it may be rendered by one who though not of the inner circle of his special intimacy is yet proud to have been his friend, and knew enough of him to admire and love him.

\* Published in *Fraser's Magazine*, February 1877.

For nine years, the portrait of Kingsley, close to that of John Parker, has looked down from the wall of the room in which I write. It is a large photograph, taken while he was on a visit to the house by an amateur of extraordinary ability, the late Dr. Adamson of St. Andrews. It is the best and most lifelike portrait of Kingsley known to me. It has the stern expression, which came partly of the effort, never quite ceasing, to express himself through that characteristic stammer which quite left him in public speaking, and which in private added to the effect of his wonderful talk. Photography caught him easily. Those who look at the portrait prefixed to Volume I. of the *Life* see the man as he lived. Mr. Woolner's bust, shown at the beginning of Volume II., shows him aged and shrunken, not more than he was but more than he ought to have been: and the removal of all hair from the face is a marked difference from the fact in life: yet the likeness is perfect too. That somewhat severe face belied one of the kindest hearts that ever beat: yet the handsome and chivalrous features not unworthily expressed one of the truest, bravest, and noblest of souls. Kingsley could not have done a mean or false thing: by his make it was as impossible as that water should run uphill. He was truly magnanimous and unselfish: the last attainment of divers not wholly ignoble minds. In these days, part of the stock in trade of the unscrupulous self-seeker is sometimes a great parade of unselfishness: the man who never in his life really exerted himself for any other end than the advantage of Number One requires you to take notice that his sole end is the glory of God and the good of mankind. And the transparent pretext, which infuriates the perspicacious few, is found to succeed with the undiscerning many. But Kingsley, who never asked you to remark how

unselfish and downright he was, was all that several successful men have pretended to be.

It is very hard to take it in that he is gone. Even when in broken health he was not the kind of man one thinks of as to die. And he did not live out his life. He had greatly overworked himself, but he did not die worn-out. Life's taper might have been husbanded out far longer. He died, like the hosts he had felt for, and pleaded for, of preventible disease. Rest, and care, might have kept him with us for many a day and year. I see and hear him now, life-like beyond expression, sitting on a seat, vacant now, opposite this table on which I write, with two little boys on his knees, telling them stories of his own as good as the *Water Babies*. I see, as if present, the keen sharp eye with which he scanned the little faces, to see if they were taking in what he said. And now he would only have been fifty-seven.

Looking back on one's own life, as a whole, you know how short it sometimes seems. It is indeed 'our little life.' But it is in reading a biography, a well-written and interesting biography, that one feels into how little space past time and past life crush up, as we look back. All a laborious life, not quite a short one,—all a human being's share of this world's work and history,—go into two volumes, which you can get through in an evening. Good Dean Alford has the memorial of all his hard work, all his disappointments and successes, in one. It is a common complaint, now-a-days, that biographies are too long. They may be, often, for the worth of what they have to tell. But if they are designed to convey the impression of what the man's life really was, they are of necessity too short. Two volumes, even if large ones, must fail to give you the feeling of real long years. They bring too near the changed and wearied

man at the end, to the hopeful youth at the beginning. They cannot truly show how gradual and imperceptible was the change, in feeling, in belief, in surroundings, in all things. Not even Dr. Newman could do it, in his too little space. And a biography, lively and readable throughout, necessarily fails to convey the fact concerning our life: the long dull periods, slowly dragging over, and the quiet uneventful times that seem now to have been so peaceful and happy. You may tell us, in a few pages or sentences, that a human being lived so many years here or there, did such work, passed through such transitions of character and feeling, experienced the pressure of such anxieties and losses. But only a very long history, designedly dull for many pages together, and going into details wearisome to most readers, can truthfully represent the fact of a life in which the sun never shines on three hundred and sixty-five days at once: in which the whole man by imperceptible gradation moves away and away. The story of Kingsley's life is indeed very briefly told in these two considerable volumes.

When he was born his father was vicar of Holne, under Dartmoor. Father and mother were both remarkable: Kingsley delighted to say that all the talent of his family was hereditary. When six weeks old, he left Devonshire, and he did not see his birth-place again till he was a man of thirty: but his mother's enthusiasm for the scenery round Holne was transmitted; and everything connected with Devonshire had a mysterious charm for Kingsley through all his life. His father held several charges in succession: one at Burton-on-Trent, one at Barnack in the Fen country, whose wide flats had also a singular attraction for Charles: then he held the living of Clovelly, a strange and lovely village in North Devon:

where the extraordinary scenery and the curious primitive people left an indelible impression on his son: 'the inspiration of my life,' were the son's own words. In 1836, when Charles was seventeen, his father became rector of St. Luke's, Chelsea: and a change passed, of necessity, upon the outward surroundings of the family. This living the elder Kingsley held till his death. Charles was a precocious child. At four years old he preached a sermon which is preserved: and which is not unlike the sermons of other thoughtful little boys at four. He was gentle and quiet. All his life he suffered from a painful shyness: though he certainly did not look like it. His father was a Tory and an Evangelical: and though Charles was always a most dutiful son, his father's views (as in many similar cases) acted upon him for a considerable part of his life by way of repulsion. He gravitated towards them again as he grew older. When twelve years old, along with a brother who soon died, he was placed at Helston Grammar School in Cornwall, whose Head-Master was Mr. Derwent Coleridge, the son of the poet. Here Charles was 'a tall, slight boy, of keen visage, and of great bodily activity, high-spirited, earnest, and energetic; ' 'original to the verge of eccentricity; ' and foremost in feats of agility and adventure. It was remembered in the school how well he bore pain. Once, having a sore finger, he determined to cure it by the actual cautery; and having heated the poker red-hot in the school-room fire, he calmly applied it two or three times to the wound. There are those who, looking at a cheerful fire on a winter evening, have found it wholly impossible to imagine how any mortal could by his own will be burnt alive. Kingsley could have understood, whether as man or boy. He wrote from school to his mother that 'I am now

quite settled and very happy. I read my Bible every night, and try to profit by what I read, and I am sure I do. I am keeping a journal of my actions and thoughts, and I hope it will be useful to me.' When his father went to Chelsea in 1836, Kingsley became a student of King's College, London. It was a lift in the church ; but as with many such, the substantial gain was balanced by sentimental loss.

' The change to a London rectory, with its ceaseless parish work, the discussion of which is so wearisome to the young, the middle-class society of a suburban district as Chelsea was then, the polemical conversation all seemingly so narrow and conventional in its tone, chafed the boy's spirit, and had anything but a happy effect on his mind.

' His parents were absorbed in their parish work, and their religious views precluded all public amusement for their children.'

I have heard Kingsley speak keenly of this period in his life ; and describe, in his vehement fashion, the mutinous spirit which possessed him, not against parental authority nor even parental views, but against the views and idiosyncrasy of the entire school of good folk among whom he had to live. But what he felt did not much appear on the surface. The excellent Professor Hall, of the Mathematical chair in King's College, writes of him, ' I own his subsequent career astonished me, for as a youth he was gentle and diffident even to timidity.' Professor Hall has doubtless seen his old students turn out both a great deal better and a great deal worse than he anticipated of them.

In the Autumn of 1838 Kingsley went to Magdalen College, Cambridge. Here he gained a scholarship by competition. And on July 6, 1839, he and his future wife met for the first time. From the beginning a powerful and healthful influence was exerted

upon him by this lady. He was full of religious doubts. His peculiar character had not been understood at home.

‘ His heart had been half asleep. It woke up now, and never slept again. For the first time he could speak with perfect freedom, and he met with answering sympathy. And gradually, as the new friendship (which yet seemed old—from the first more of a recognition than an acquaintance) deepened into intimacy, every doubt, every thought, every feeling, every sin as he would call it, was laid bare. Counsel was asked and given: all things in heaven and earth discussed: and as new hopes dawned, the look of hard defiance gave way to a wonderful humility and tenderness, which were his characteristics, with those who understood him, to his dying day.’

Yet after this, the dark cloud returned.

‘ The conflict between hopes and fears for the future, and between faith and unbelief, was so fierce and bitter, that when he returned to Cambridge he became reckless, and nearly gave up all for lost: he read little, went in for excitement of every kind,—boating, hunting, driving, fencing, boxing, duck-shooting in the fens,—anything to deaden the remembrance of the happy past, which just then promised no future.’

With all his spiritual struggles, his physical strength did not fail. In one day he walked to London, fifty-two miles, without much fatigue: and for years after this a walk of five-and-twenty miles was a refreshment to him. Finally he took a good degree, having worked very energetically for his last few months at the University. He was Senior Optime in Mathematics, and First Class in Classics. But all who knew him were aware that this was little to what he might have done had he not fallen into that deplorable condition of morbid idleness.

He had been entered at Lincoln's Inn, thinking of the Bar ; but by a felicitous choice turned to the profession for which above all others his whole character fitted him. Through all this period of his life, his letters to his future wife are as curious specimens of such a correspondence as John Foster's famous Essays, which were letters written in like circumstances. He began to see good in the Low Church party : and he thought Archbishop Whately (who would not have thanked him for mis-spelling his name as *Whateley*) ' the greatest mind of the present day.' He was ordained Deacon at Farnham, by Bishop Sumner of Winchester, whose personal character and inoffensive life did something (much needed) to obliterate the recollection of how he got there. And in July 1842, at the age of twenty-three, Kingsley settled at Eversley, where first as Curate and then as Rector he was to remain for just thirty-three years. It was, and is, a singular parish : with scenery rather Scotch than English. Three hamlets, each surrounding its little green, are surrounded by the moorland, and by young forests of self-sown fir-trees. Parts of the country round are liker Perthshire than Hampshire. But the village-green, the church and the rectory, are distinctively English. The great fir-trees on the rectory-lawn are known far and wide. The people were much given to poaching. An occasional royal deer from the not remote Windsor Forest would stray into Eversley parish and never return : and hares and pheasants in the old days were common in cottages where now they are rarely seen. The parish had been grievously neglected : the church was empty on Sundays and the public-houses full. But things speedily changed. Kingsley threw all his youthful enthusiasm into his work. And thus early he develops those views of what came to be termed

*Muscular Christianity* : by which he meant nothing more nor less than the maintenance of the *mens sana in corpore sano*. He writes,

‘ The body is the temple of the Living God. There has always seemed to me something impious in the neglect of personal health, strength, and beauty, which the religious, and sometimes clergymen of this day affect. It is very often a mere form of laziness and untidiness. I should be ashamed of being weak. I could not do half the little good I do here, if it were not for that strength and activity which some consider coarse and degrading. Many clergymen would half kill themselves if they did what I do. And though they might walk about as much, they would neglect exercise of the arms and chest, and become dyspeptic or consumptive.’

All this seems commonplace now, because Kingsley, and others who independently arrived at the same conclusions about the same time, have succeeded in getting it so generally accepted. One has heard it from pulpits without number : but the days were in which it was fresh and (to some folk) startling. I have known a case in which a sermon designed to show that the care of the body is a Christian duty, was pleasantly described as teaching that men should take more care of their bodies than their souls. But this description of the fashion in which Kingsley got hold of his parishioners tells of what for many years now has been very common both in Scotland and England :

‘ This was one secret of his influence at Eversley : he could swing a flail with the threshers in the barn, turn his swathe with the mowers in the meadows, pitch hay with the haymakers in the pasture. From knowing every fox-earth on the moor, the “reedy house” of the pike, the still hole where the chub lay, he had

always a word in sympathy for the huntsman or the old poacher. With the farmer he discussed the rotation of crops, and with the labourer the science of hedging and ditching.'

A dark time came. There was a long break in his correspondence with his future wife: no doubt the break was intended to be final. A year of silence and hard work passed over. He was 'roughly lodged in a thatched cottage,' and the prospect of preferment in the Church seemed small. One feels how vain it is to represent, by a few lines written in the knowledge of future years, what that time must have been. Doubtless it served its purpose. At length the sky brightened. He was promised a living: the helpful correspondence was resumed: and in the prospect of being soon married he laid out his plan of life.

'We must have a regular rule of life, not so as to become a law, but a custom. Family prayers before breakfast: 8.30 to 10, household matters: 10 to 1, studying divinity or settling parish accounts and business,—our doors open for poor parish visitants: between 1 and 5, go out in all weathers, to visit sick and poor, and to teach in the school; in the evening we will draw, and feed the intellect and fancy. We must devote 9 to 12 on Monday mornings to casting up our weekly bills and accounts, and make a rule never to mention them, if possible, at any other time: and never to talk of household matters, unless urgent, but between 9 and 10 in the morning; nor of parish business in the evening. I have seen the *gêne* and misery which not following some such rule brings down. We must pray for a spirit of order and regularity and economy in the least things.'

Wisely resolved! Let us hope these rules were practically carried out. Early in 1844 the young couple were married: Charles Kingsley and Fanny,

daughter of Pascoe Grenfell and Georgiana St. Leger his wife. They were to have settled at a curacy in Dorsetshire: but the living of Eversley becoming vacant, Kingsley was presented to it, and settled down in the rectory which is indissolubly associated with his name..

‘ He now settled at Eversley with his wife: and life flowed on peacefully, notwithstanding the anxieties of a sorely-neglected parish, and the expenses of an old house which had not been repaired for more than a hundred years. The house itself was damp and unwholesome, surrounded with ponds which overflowed with every heavy rain, and flooded not only the garden and stables, but all the rooms on the ground floor, keeping up master and servants sometimes all night, bailing out the water in buckets for hours together: and drainage works had to be done before it was habitable. From these causes, and from the charities falling almost entirely on the incumbent, the living, although a good one, was for years unremunerative: but the young rector, happy in his home and his work, met all difficulties bravely: and gradually, in the course of years, the land was drained: the ponds which ran through the garden and stood above the level of the dwelling-rooms were filled up, and though the house was never healthy, it was habitable.’

It is a disappointing account of the picturesque house which so many know. It must be confessed that a modern building, well built and roofed in, thoroughly drained and ventilated, with lofty ceilings and large windows, is, after all, a preferable habitation to many a charming mediæval mansion, delightful to an æsthetic eye. Nor is cost to be forgotten. I have heard Kingsley say that it cost him £80 a year to keep his rectory in repair.

There was a turn-over in all parochial arrangements. Of course, there were some who opposed the new rector's *innovations*. The communion had been celebrated three times a year, and the churchwardens refused to provide for monthly celebrations. Kingsley had himself for many years to bear the cost, and doubtless the wrath of some who had known the church for thirty years and never wished these new-fangled decencies. But he made his way. He was a devoted parish-priest, visiting perpetually, as well as preaching regularly. He thought it best, amid that generation of poachers, never to touch a gun: but he sometimes had a gallop in the hunting-field. 'I defy any mortal,' said he to the writer, 'to point out any part of my duty that is neglected: and, that being so, I take my recreation in my own way.' His preaching from the first arrested attention. The extraordinary experience of being able to listen with interest to a sermon was not the least startling of the innovations which aroused the parishioners of Eversley. The respectable Bishop Sumner, characteristically, found fault with the sermons as 'too colloquial.' One has known many respectable dignitaries to whom, for obvious reasons, a sermon to which human beings could listen was an unpardonable offence.

Now the active mind turned to literary work. *The Saints Tragedy*, his vehement testimony against asceticism, undertaken by the house of Parker, was published at the end of 1847. It excited much feeling at Oxford, traversing as it did the teaching in favour there: and when at Oxford on a visit in the spring of 1848, Kingsley found himself an object of interest to many. *Fraser's Magazine* had recently come into the hands of the Parkers, and at this time (April 1848) his first paper appeared in it, under the title *Why should we fear the Romish Priests?* Through the Parkers,

Kingsley became acquainted with men who were to be his special friends: Thomas Hughes, Helps, J. A. Froude, Huliah, J. M. Ludlow, Archdeacon Hare. The Chartist movement of this year greatly interested him: he wrote a placard addressed to the *Workmen of England*, which was posted over London at a critical time: and he contributed to a little publication, *Politics for the People*, published by Parker, under the name of *Parson Lot*. I possess the bound volume: there never was but one; and I cannot say that it is interesting or impressive in any high degree. And the name of *Parson Lot*, suggestive of the one righteous man in Sodom, does not seem felicitous. Kingsley, in fact, in an exciting time, had (for a season) too great belief in people being saved and helped by fussiness, by public meetings, and political papers. And his declaration at a meeting of uneducated men who (as a rule) were disposed to do anything except work hard, practise self-denial, and help themselves, that he was 'a Church of England parson and a Chartist,' did no good either to himself or the cause he had at heart. *Yeast* came out as a series of papers in *Fraser*; and then, under the pressure of work and excitement, Kingsley quite broke down, and had to rest for some time in Devonshire. He felt strongly the necessity for making public worship bright and attractive: he writes to a friend, 'Do I not shudder at the ghastly dulness of our services?' In this approximating to his great opponent of after-time. For Dr. Newman, in a speech at Birmingham, once declared of the Anglican Church, that 'the thought of her doctrines makes me shudder: the thought of her services makes me shiver.' No wonder, considering what these last were when Dr. Newman was familiar with them. Things are quite different now: thanks to the much-abused High-Churchmen.

In 1850, Kingsley, from conscientious scruples, gave up the office of Clerk in Orders in his father's parish, which he had hitherto held: and to meet growing expenses and a lessened income, he must write. The result was *Alton Locke*, written in the early mornings of the winter: which yielded him £150. The Parkers did not venture to publish it, *Yeast* having injured *Fraser*; but it was brought out by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, on the recommendation of Mr. Carlyle. This new work, with *Yeast*, and the name of Chartist (given and taken with little real reason), made him a suspect man. Cautious people, with an eye to their own promotion, fought shy of him. Yet, though his years were only thirty-one, strangers began to write and ask his counsel upon many subjects. *Hypatia* came out in *Fraser*, beginning in January 1852, and running in company with *Digby Grand*, which was beginning to make the name of Whyte-Melville familiar to novel-readers. The fancies of what for a little was known as *Christian Socialism* attracted Kingsley, and his connection with it brought upon him many attacks. He felt these: but was even more annoyed by the eccentricities and follies of the odd set among whom he found himself as its supporters.

It was in the summer of 1851 that by invitation of the incumbent he preached in a London church a sermon on *The Message of the Church to the Labouring Man*, at the close of which the incumbent arose and informed the congregation that much of what Kingsley had said was dangerous and much untrue. The event was not unique; I have known the like happen in Scotland. Kingsley made no reply, though denounced in the newspapers as the 'Apostle of Socialism.' So innocent was the sermon that the Bishop of London (Blomfield), who hearing of the disturbance had forbidden Kingsley to preach in his diocese, after reading

it and conversing with the author removed his prohibition. It is to be regretted that the biography records, as if worth something, some demonstrations by 'working men' which are only to be classed with those in favour of Orton and Dr. Kenealy. It was because these wrong-headed persons fancied that Kingsley's sermon was what every good man would disapprove, that they rallied round him. An equally discreditable impulse led to a proposal, never entertained, to defy the Bishop, and start a 'free church.' Kingsley behaved thoroughly well throughout these events: and the outcome of the whole was, singularly, his song of the *Three Fishers*.

It is wonderful how he found time to write the long letters he wrote to strangers asking counsel. And it might be difficult to construct a consistent scheme of the theology he taught in them. I remember his admitting this frankly, on being asked how this was to go with that. 'You logical Scotchmen,' he said, 'must construct consistent theories: I have intuitions of individual truths: how they are to be reconciled I know not.'

Now strangers began to appear in Eversley church: officers from Sandhurst, and an occasional clergyman.

'After he gave out his text, the poor men in the free sittings would turn towards him, and settle themselves into an attitude of fixed attention. In preaching he would try to keep still and calm, and free from all gesticulation: but as he went on, he had to grip and clasp the cushion on which his sermon rested, in order to restrain the intensity of his own emotion; and when in spite of himself his hands would escape, they would be lifted up, the fingers of the right hand working with a peculiar hovering movement of which he was quite unconscious: his eyes seemed on fire, his whole frame worked and vibrated.'

He tried to carry out a theory I have heard him express, that a preacher might fitly be as animated as he could be without moving his hands from his sermon. All gesticulation, he said, was vulgar and theatrical. This he said, listening to some account of an eminent Scotch preacher who used profuse gesticulation. But the theory, surely, grounds on a quite arbitrary canon of propriety; and Kingsley traversed it himself.

Mrs. Kingsley gives a pleasing picture of the father amid his family, where he sought to surround the children with an atmosphere of joyousness, and where punishment was hardly known. Solomon has a good deal to answer for, in the matter of spoiling children's tempers and breaking their spirits. And his own attempts to bring up his children well do not appear to have been so successful as Kingsley's. The griefs of childhood Kingsley could not bear to see: and busy as he might be, his study was always open to the little sufferer from some small trouble: many fine sentences were broken off to mend a broken toy. He instilled into his children the love of what (in some cases with little reason) are called Inferior Animals: down even to toads and snakes. But he could not bear a spider.

So his life went on, his reputation growing, and clearing itself of the old suspicions; though no doubt many good folk thought him rather a strange kind of parson. It has been said that he was a layman in the disguise of a clergyman. In one sense, this was true. He did not fear Mrs. Grundy. He would as soon shock her as not. But in the deeper truth, there never was a man more essentially a clergyman in all his ways and feelings. His piety pervaded his entire life: his reverence for religious truth was unceasing. If the old prim idea of clerical propriety is in great measure gone, the abandonment of a

conventional sham is to some degree due to Kingsley. Much of his teaching, like that of Newman and of Carlyle, does not seem to us now so original as in fact it was when first given forth, because we have so much learned it. One thinks of the man, disappointed in hearing a play of Shakespeare. 'I was told,' he said, 'that Shakespeare was a man of original genius: whereas the play consisted to a great extent of the most hackneyed quotations.' In 1859, Kingsley was made chaplain to the Queen; which in many estimable quarters, though not in all, would be received as testimony to his substantial orthodoxy.

In May 1860 he was offered the Professorship of Modern History at Cambridge, which he accepted with some diffidence. It was then the writer first met him. For ten days, in the middle of a beautiful May, one long accustomed to a very retired life had a first glimpse of eminent men of letters under the hospitable roof of John Parker. How bright, kind, brotherly, and unaffected they were! It was profoundly interesting, and very strange. Among them were Helps, pleased with his appointment, just made, as Clerk of Council: and Kingsley, full of his new Professorship. I see them both, one bright May forenoon, sitting in Parker's pleasant library, both smoking, and Kingsley vehemently setting forth to Helps his plans for his lectures, for two very short hours. Then Helps had to go. The day was very warm, and Kingsley had talked himself into a white heat; accordingly, he discarded his coat, and sat in his shirt-sleeves. In a little Parker opened the door wide, and said with some solemnity, *The Bishop of London*. Kingsley, always respectful to dignities, made a rush for his coat and had got half-way into it: when, with grave and solemn demeanour, fitted to the Episcopal bench, beseeming the title he had heard given him, walked in Helps!

Kingsley, though charming, was certainly (as Parker said) 'a most exhausting companion:' London acted upon him as a powerful stimulant, fresh from the moors of Eversley: and Parker's weaker physique could not keep pace with that robust bodily health and the almost uproarious spirits. One of the band round Parker's table was Buckle, of the *History of Civilisation*. His fluency was wonderful: his knowledge seemed equal in all directions: he never would leave off talking if he could find a listener: the complaint was that he preached. But he was very impatient of all other preachers: not an entirely unknown characteristic. He had the enviable power of never allowing himself to be hurried in his work. Helps was John Parker's prophet: who can speak of him worthily? Wisest, kindest, best of men! Mr. Theodore Martin and his wife (that supreme dramatic genius) were among Parker's chief friends. And Ormsby, one of the brightest and cleverest writers upon topics of the day: who wrote the essay, worthy of Charles Lamb, entitled *Where Fancy is Bred*. Parker was a constant visitor at Eversley Rectory: the writer will never forget a beautiful day at this time on which Parker and he went by railway to Winchfield, and thence walked the five miles to Eversley: spending as many hours as possible with Kingsley about the church and glebe, and walking back with him by Bramshill. That autumn was saddened by Parker's sudden death. Kingsley writes of him, 'His was a great soul in a pigmy body; and those who know how I loved him, know what a calumny it is to say I preach "muscular Christianity."'

About this time, Kingsley evinced a curious irritability on the last-named matter. Let him speak for himself in a remarkable letter written in February of this year to one then unknown to him, who after-

wards became his friend ; and who had contributed some papers to the magazine, one of which touched the sore subject. This letter sets forth the fullest statement known to me of his views upon it.

EVERSLEY, February 15, '60.

DEAR SIR,—Were you not so charming a writer ; and one whom I long to know and to thank in person, I should not trouble you or myself by writing this.

But. In an essay of yours which seems to me one of your very best ; and in every word of which I agree, I find (pp. 250, 251) talk which pains me bitterly, about muscular Christianity ! Now—I am called by noodles and sneerers the head of that school. When muscular Christianity is spoken of, either Tom Hughes or I rise to most folks' minds. Tom may take care of himself ; for me, I say this.

I consider the term as silly and offensive. Whenever any man makes use of it to me, I ignore the whole matter, and if I be troubled give him to understand that he is rude. And for this reason. It is all a dream, as far as I am concerned, about muscular Christianity. The best folk I know, or ever shall know, have been poor cripples, noodles, ugly women, and that sort of ' offscouring of humanity '—whom the Lord loved, because there is no form nor comeliness in them, to make men love them. Then because I tell the handsome women and the strong men, ' Why are you not as good as these poor wretches ? You can and ought to be a great deal better ; ' an insolent — reviewer, or somebody, gives me the nickname Muscular Christianity, and sets up the theory that my ideal is a man who fears God, and can walk a 1,000 miles in a 1,000 hours. I have my ideal—I have many ideals—which I shall keep to myself ; but I confess I have never been more moved than by such talk to show the young prig, whoever he was, my muscular *un*-Christianity, unless my right hand had forgotten its cunning, and the lessons of Sambo the Black Fighter. But boy's nonsense on such subjects I can pass over. It is when a man like you re-echoes their impertinence (you yourself being not impertinent, and therefore speaking in good faith, —which is all the more painful to me) that I must speak to you and ask, Do you think that I, who am not only a student of human nature, but have been a hard-working parish priest for 18 years, and love my parish work better than anything else in the world—do you think that I am such a one-sided ass as to preach what you seem to understand by muscular Christianity ? There is not a word in your condemnation of it, to which I have not said ' amen ' a dozen years since ; and I beg that if that passage is to stand in your essays, you will except from the category me, the very man whom noodles call the apostle of the doctrine.

I do entreat you to re-consider that passage. It is unjust, not to

me, but to others. You say you find many books which talk, etc. : I wish you would name them to me. A list of them would be most pleasant to me ; for, ill and weak as I am, and forbidden to write, I would bestir myself to give any fellows who talk as you say (though I have never met with any) such a dressing in *Fraser* as would show them that my tongue was still sharp enough : do, I beg you, tell me explicitly what and whom you mean—or say yourself—as you can do most excellently, in your next edition ; and meanwhile, take the hint which I gave a young fellow (though you are not young, nor a 'fellow,' but a wise and good man) who said in a well-meaning review of me, that I had never had an ache or a sorrow in my life ; and I told him—as I tell you—that for the first twenty years of my life I never knew what health meant—that my life had been one of deep and strange sorrows ; and that only by drinking the cup of misery and sickness to the dregs had I learnt to value health and happiness, and to entreat those who had health and happiness, to use them aright ; for for all these things God would bring them into judgment.

I write to you openly, as to a brother, for I long to know you more than any man whom I find writing now ; and for that very reason I cannot abide your seeming to lend yourself to any of the vulgar misconceptions of what I am aiming at. I have my aim : but what that is I tell no man yet.—Yours ever faithfully,

C. KINGSLEY.

On November 12 he delivered his Inaugural lecture in the crowded Senate House at Cambridge, meeting an enthusiastic welcome from the undergraduates : and to a class of upwards of a hundred he gave his first course of lectures, afterwards published as *The Norman and the Teuton*. Opinions have varied as to the value of Kingsley's historical teaching : but there can be no difference of opinion as to his power of interesting young men. In 1861 he gave a course of private lectures to the Prince of Wales, with a little class of eleven others. The lectures carried the class up to the reign of George IV. : the Prince was diligent in his attendance, and at the end of each term passed a satisfactory examination. *The Water Babies* came out in the spring of 1862 : and in August of that year Kingsley visited Scotland, spending some days in Edinburgh, where for the first time he saw the worship of the Scotch Kirk. ' You can't expect me to like

it,' was his candid statement to the friend he had heard preach.

His life and work went on, at Eversley and at Cambridge. Little need be said of the controversy into which, at the critical age of forty-five, he fell with Dr. Newman. Kingsley was substantially in the right, though Newman was the better handler of his case: and of Newman's personal integrity there never could be doubt in the mind of any reasonable man. In the spring of 1867 he edited *Fraser* for a few months in Mr. Froude's absence at Simancas. Though interested in the Magazine in which his literary life began, he had none of the feeling which has made others hold by a periodical for the sake of *Auld Lang Syne*, when offered far higher pay elsewhere. 'I carry my pigs to the best market,' was his downright remark to the writer. In the Autumn of 1867 he came to Scotland, and spent a memorable week in the ancient city of St. Andrews, winning the hearts of all who came to know him. 'I apprehend I am a bad Englishman,' he wrote: 'for I like you Scots far better than my own countrymen.' When the writer received him at the railway, he looked older than he should have done. He said he had despised sick folk, and was now being punished duly: never feeling quite well. But after a bath in water nearly boiling, he brightened up, and was the life of a gathering at dinner of men and women who valued him as they ought. The British Association was to hold its meetings in the great town of Dundee, twelve miles off; and Kingsley had come mainly to attend these. But he did not trouble the British Association much. Just twice did he go to Dundee. Three trains and one ferry-boat (across the Tay) were needed to cover the distance from St. Andrews; the marvellous Tay Bridge, spanning the river where two miles broad at a height of

a hundred feet above the water, was not yet : and Kingsley got tired of the journey. The day after his arrival, Wednesday, September 4, was bright and warm. He spent the day wandering about the ruined Castle and Cathedral, and sitting on the grass in St. Salvator's College ; and in the evening went to Dundee to hear the Duke of Buccleuch give his address as President. There was a vast crowd in the handsome Kinnaird Hall : a great gathering, on the huge platform, of the philosophers of the age : and Kingsley was delighted when the Duke, very bright-looking and well set up, the broad blue ribbon of the garter crossing his breast, and every inch what it was his duty to be, began his address by saying that a good deal had been said by those who had proposed him for President about the bold Buccleuchs of past ages : but that not one of them had ever done anything requiring so much courage as he needed in rising to address all the scientific sages of the land. Of course, the applause was tremendous. But the rest of the speech was not so good. Next day was given to a thorough examination of the old buildings of St. Andrews, in company with the good Dr. Robert Chambers : and to a partial round of the famous Links, to see the national game of golf. 'Very French,' was his estimate of the St. Andrews Gothic. When that city was in its glory, France was the allied country and England the hostile one. Another evening visit to Dundee, on a subsequent day, ended Kingsley's attendance on the British Association. It pleased him much more to sit at his window and look out upon the broad bay, close under it : talking eagerly of all human things. On the Saturday afternoon, the University entertained the leading members of the Association at dinner in St. Salvator's Hall, and here Kingsley made a most beautiful and touching little speech, replying to the

toast of *The Literature of Science*. Then, later, there was a reception in the University library, where he was certainly the observed of all observers. Divers great men were there, but none so gazed upon as Kingsley. In all sincerity, he disliked it. Next day, he wrote to his wife :

ST. ANDREWS, Sunday, September 7.

I am looking out on a glassy sea, with the seabirds sailing about close under the window. I could wish to be at home seeing you all go to church. Yesterday was a day of infinite bustle. The University and City received the British Association, and feasted them. Everything was very well done, except putting me down for a speech against my express entreaty. However, I only spoke five minutes. After this early dinner a reception *soirée* of all the ladies of Fifeshire 'East Neuk': we escaped early. I hate being made a lion of, and stuck tight to Mrs. B. — Nothing can be more pleasant than my stay here has been: but the racket of the meeting is terrible: the talking continual: and running into Dundee, by two trains, with the steamer at Broughty Ferry, between, is too much: so I have taken up my hat, and am off to Tilliepronie to-morrow. — These dear Scots folk,—I should like to live always among them, they are so full of vigorous life and heart. — Tell Maurice Golf is the queen of games, if Cricket is the King: and the golfing gentlemen as fine fellows as ever I saw.

Still, he was not well. That Sunday forenoon he spent in bed: and when his friend returned from church, Kingsley said, with a sad face, 'I have had a dreich morning.' Yet he roused himself and went in the afternoon to the parish church of St. Andrews, and in the evening to the pretty little chapel of St. Salvator's College, to hear a sermon by Principal Tulloch. He never went to bed, that week, before 1 A.M., and his flow of bright and enthusiastic talk was unceasing. Then he went up to Abergeldie, the residence of the Prince of Wales. The fine scenery was hidden by mists. Writing to St. Andrews, he said that on the other side he had drawn an accurate picture of the view from his window. The page was blank, except a frame surrounding it.

In the end of 1868 he resigned his chair, and in June,

1869, he was appointed Canon of Chester. Here he preached, taught the lads Natural History, and became a great power in the beautiful old city. He found the daily service 'very steadyng and elevating.' In December of that year he and his daughter visited the West Indies. His impressions are given in his book *At Last*. In 1872, being now fifty-three, he was startled by the death of Mr. Maurice, of whom he always spoke as his master; and by that of Norman Macleod. 'He is gone as I am surely going,' he said; 'a man who has worn his brain away.' Yet he could not stop. Thinking of Kingsley's deep reverence for Maurice, one remembers with shame how far his students, in departed years, failed of rightly appreciating his lectures. I recall a little fortnightly, named *The Autocrat*, published in King's College long ago, in which this brief paragraph appeared:—

‘Startling Phenomenon.

‘A barometer from the museum had been accidentally left in Professor Maurice’s class-room. Instantly on the lecture beginning, the index suddenly pointed to *Very Dry*.’

Kingsley became enthusiastic for the teaching in common schools of the laws of health. ‘Alas,’ he writes, ‘why could we not have a professor of them at Cambridge and another at Oxford, and make every young landowner and student for holy orders attend their lectures?’ It is worth notice that for many years his views have been carried out, though not by compulsion, in the case of the students for the Church in the little University of St. Andrews. Though the old energy was commonly present, the greatness of the way was telling now. In the summer of 1873 he wrote answers to a paper of questions familiar to

many readers. To the question 'Your ambition?' the answer was, 'To die.' One remembers the end of John Foster's grand sermon on *The Three Jews in Babylon*. 'As to them, there could remain, after that day, but one thing that was sublime enough for their ambition;—the translation by death!'

In the spring of this year, Mr. Gladstone wrote to him proposing that he should exchange his canonry at Chester for the vacant stall in Westminster Abbey. 'All I had ever wished, and more than I had ever hoped,' were his words in reply to a letter of congratulation. He had got to the end of his tether now. He would be no longer obliged to write for money, but might give his strength to his sermons alone. What the Great Abbey was to such a man, need not be said; nor what its Dean. And beloved Eversley, never to be abandoned, was but forty miles away. His eldest boy came back for a holiday from Mexico, just at the time of his father's promotion; and his aged mother, now in her eighty-sixth year, knew of his appointment before she died. Kingsley was pleased with the general sympathy amid which he entered on this dignified position; it blotted out many bitter recollections. But if he was no longer suspected, as the chartist parson and apostle of socialism, it is equally true that he was neither chartist nor socialist, Christian or other; but a reasonable Conservative in politics, and theologically a good old-fashioned High-Churchman, with a liberal tone about his dogmatic creed. These things came too late. His son, struck by his broken appearance, urged rest and a sea-voyage. But the work at the Abbey must be done; great crowds thronged to listen to his preaching. The rest was put off till the beginning of 1874, when, with his eldest daughter, he sailed for America for change,

and to see his boy, 'taking a few lectures with him, to meet his expenses.' There was but a year now. He left Queenstown on January 30, and January 23 in the next year was his last day. He was six months in America; he met everywhere a warm welcome: he felt at first very well. At Salt Lake City, Brigham Young offered him the Tabernacle to lecture or preach in; but Kingsley returned no answer to one beyond the pale of decent life. He visited Yo Semite, and saw the Big Trees. At San Francisco he caught a bad cold: and his brother 'The Doctor' meeting him in California found him suffering severely from pleurisy. It was while ill in Colorado that he wrote his last lines: as spirited and musical as any he ever wrote. Having so far recovered, he came home in August 1874, 'looking for a blessed quiet autumn, if God so will, having had a change of scene which will last me my whole life, and has taught me many things.'

But the end was near. And (as is usual) wise after the event, one sees, looking back, how needlessly it was hastened. That eager heart was not made to last long, indeed: thinking of Kingsley, one feels how apt are the words that speak of 'life's fitful fever.' But everything was against him through the months that remained. He returned to Eversley in trying weather: there was much sickness in the parish: his curate was away: and still weak from his American illness, he had to do duty far beyond his strength. Then, going to his Westminster work in September, a severe attack of congestion of the liver (the same thing which had needed the boiling baths of St. Andrews seven years before) left him sadly shaken and worn: and, while little able to bear it, early in October the dangerous illness of his wife reached him where he felt most keenly. But she recovered for the time; and in November he preached

in the Abbey to vast congregations sermons wrung out with increasing labour, and as powerful as ever, though the preacher was shrunken and bent. On Advent Sunday, November 29, he preached, with intense fervour, his last sermon in that great church: no one thinking that he would enter a pulpit no more. It was a day of dreadful storm all over Britain: the gale seemed to shake the Abbey; and to Kingsley's sensitive nature the whole service was most exciting. The sermon was specially eloquent, but it left him quite exhausted. Next day, St. Andrew's Day, Kingsley heard Principal Caird of Glasgow give a lecture on Missions in the Nave, the Dean having ventured to ask that most eminent of Scotch preachers to appear in the Abbey, but not to preach, nor to take part in any service known to the Church. Coming out into the cold cloister, Kingsley caught fresh cold and coughed all night. On December 3, he and his wife left for Eversley. But that night his wife was stricken down with what seemed fatal illness: and when told that there was no hope, he said his own death-warrant was signed. He was careless of his own health, in a season of bitter frost and snow: and on December 28 he took to his bed, prostrated by inflammation of the lungs. Constant opiates were used to keep off haemorrhage, and his dreams were all of the West Indies and the Rocky Mountains. His wife and he could not see one another: and the last two days he did not ask for her, evidently thinking she was gone. One sees, dimly, something of the strange experience the loving heart was going through. Early in the morning of January 23, thinking himself alone, he was heard repeating in a clear voice those beautiful words of the Burial Service which ask that we be not suffered, 'at our last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from Thee.' He never spoke again: and

before mid-day—passing so gently that his daughter and the old family nurse could scarcely tell when—Kingsley was gone. Where he went, he would miss one whom he had thought gone before him: one united through these years by ties which he often said eternity could not sever. His dream had been of that supreme blessing expressed in the unforgettable words *in death they were not divided*. But the wise and good woman was left for a little to tell, touchingly and beautifully, the story of the noble life which she had helped so mightily to ennoble.

Dean Stanley offered a grave in Westminster Abbey: but no one who knew Kingsley could doubt where it was that he would himself have desired to be laid. And on January 28, 1875, he was carried to his last resting-place in Eversley churchyard by villagers who had known and trusted him as their Rector, with very imperfect knowledge of what he was beyond the limits of the parish. The Bishop of Winchester, the Deans of Westminster and Chester: soldiers and sailors: the Master of Fox Hounds, with his huntsman and whip, and outside the churchyard the horses and hounds: the gypsies of Eversley Common: the representative of the Prince of Wales: peers and members of Parliament, authors and publishers: were all gathered round the grave. In that familiar place, where every tree and shrub was known and tended by him, he rests. Above his head his wife has placed a cross of white marble. It bears, in the words *God is Love*, the central and vital truth in Kingsley's creed: and it sums the story of his life in words he had chosen long before:

*n.B. 11*  
AMAVIMUS, AMAMUS, AMABIMUS. )

*splendid*

## VII.

### BEATEN.

DO you know this peculiar feeling? I speak to men in middle age.

To be bearing up as manfully as you can: putting a good face on things: trying to persuade yourself that you have done very fairly in life after all: and all of a sudden to feel that merciful self-deception fail you, and just to break down: to own how bitterly beaten and disappointed you are, and what a sad and wretched failure you have made of life?

There is no one in the world we all try so hard to cheat and delude, as ourselves. How we hoodwink that individual, and try to make him look at things through rose-coloured spectacles! Like the poor little girl in Mr. Dickens's touching story, we make believe very much. But sometimes we are not able to make believe. The illusion goes. The bare, unvarnished truth forces itself upon us: and we see what miserable little wretches we are: how poor and petty are our ends in life: and what a dull, weary round it all is. You remember the poor old half-pay officer, of whom Charles Lamb tells us. He was not to be disillusioned. He asked you to hand him the silver sugar-tongs in so confident a tone, that though your eyes testified that it was but a teaspoon, and that of Britannia metal, a certain spell was cast over your mind. But rely on it,

though the veteran kept up in this way before people, he would often break down when he was alone.

Is it sometimes so with all of us? We are none of us half-satisfied with ourselves. We know we are poor creatures, though we try to persuade ourselves that we are tolerably good. At least, if we have any sense, this is so. Yet I greatly envied a man whom I passed in the street yesterday; a stranger, a middle-aged person. His nose was elevated in the air: he had a supercilious demeanour, expressive of superiority to his fellow-creatures, and contempt for them. Perhaps he was a prince, and so entitled to look down on ordinary folk. Perhaps he was a bagman. The few princes I have ever seen, had nothing of his aspect. But what a fine thing it would be, to be able always to delude yourself with the belief that you are a great and important person: to be always quite satisfied with yourself, and your position. There are people who, while repeating certain words in the Litany, feel as if it was a mere form signifying nothing, to call themselves *miserable sinners*. There are some who say these words sorrowfully from their very heart; feeling that they express God's truth. They know what weak, silly, sinful beings they are: they know what a poor thing they have made of life, with all their hard work, and all their planning and scheming. In fact, they feel beaten, disappointed, down. The high hopes with which they started, are blighted: were blighted long ago. They think, with a bitter laugh, of their early dreams of eminence, of success, of happiness. And sometimes, after holding up for a while as well as they could, they feel they can do it no longer. Their heart fails them. They sit down and give up altogether. Great men and good men have done it. It is a comfort to many a poor fellow to think of Elijah, beaten and sick at heart, sitting down under a scrubby bush at evening far in the

bare desert, and feeling there was no more left, and that he could bear no more. Thank God that the verse is in the Bible.

‘ But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree : and he requested for himself that he might die : and said, It is enough : now, O Lord, take away my life ; for I am not better than my fathers.’

I thought of Elijah in the wilderness the other night. I saw the great prophet again. For human nature is the same in a great prophet as in a poor little hungry boy.

At nine o’clock on Saturday evening I heard pitiful, subdued sobs and crying outside. I know the kind of thing that means some one fairly beaten. Not angry, not bitter : smashed. I opened the front door : and found a little boy, ten years old, sitting on the steps, crying. I asked him what was the matter. I see the thin, white, hungry, dirty little face. He would have slunk away, if he could : he plainly thought his case beyond all mending. But I brought him in, and set him on a chair in the lobby : and he told his story. He had a large bundle of sticks in a ragged sack : firewood. At three o’clock that afternoon, he had come out to sell them. His mother was a poor washerwoman, in the most wretched part of the town : his father was killed a fortnight ago by falling from a scaffold. He had walked a long way through the streets : about three miles. He had tried all the afternoon to sell his sticks : but had sold only a halfpennyworth. He was lame, poor little man, from a sore leg, but managed to carry his heavy load. But at last, going down some poor area stair in the dark, he fell down a whole flight of steps, and hurt his sore leg so that he could not walk, and also got a great cut on the forehead. He had got just the halfpenny for his poor mother : he had been

going about with his burden for six hours, with nothing to eat. But he turned his face homewards, carrying his sticks : and struggled on about a quarter of a mile : and then he broke down. He could go no further. In the dark cold night, he sat down and cried. It was not the crying of one who hoped to attract attention : it was the crying of flat despair.

The first thing I did (which did not take a moment) was to thank God that my door-steps had been his juniper tree. Then I remembered that the first thing God did when Elijah broke down, was to give him something to eat. Yes, it is a great thing to keep up physical nature. And the little man had had no food since three o'clock till nine. So there came, brought by kind hands (not mine) several great slices of bread and butter (jam even was added), and a cup of warm tea. The spirit began to come a little into the child. And he thought he could manage to get home if we would let him leave his sticks till Monday. We asked him what he would have got for his sticks if he had sold them all : ninepence. Under the circumstances, it appeared that a profit of a hundred per cent. was not exorbitant : so he received eighteenpence, which he stowed away somewhere in his rags : and the sack went away, and returned, with all the sticks emptied out. Finally, an old gray coat of rough tweed came, and was put upon the little boy, and carefully buttoned : forming a capital greatcoat. And forasmuch as his trousers were most unusually ragged, a pair of such appeared, and being wrapped up, were placed in the sack, along with a good deal of bread and butter. How the heart of the child had by this time revived ! He thought he could go home nicely. And having very briefly asked the Father of the fatherless to care for him, I beheld him limp away in the dark. All this is supremely little to talk about. But it was quite a

different thing to see. To look at the poor, starved little face : and the dirty hand like a claw : to think of ten years old : to think of one's own children in their warm beds : to think what all this would have been to one's self as a little child. Oh, if I had a four-leaved shamrock, what a turnover there would be in this world !

When the little man went away, I came back to my work. I took up my pen, and tried to write ; but I could not. I thought I saw many human beings besides Elijah in the case of that child. I tried to enter into the feeling (it was only too easy) of that poor little thing in his utter despair. It was sad enough, to carry about the heavy bundle hour after hour, and to sell only the halfpennyworth. But it was dreadful, after tumbling down the stair, to find he was not able to walk ; and still to be struggling to carry back his load to his bare home, which was two miles distant from this spot. And at last to sit down in misery on the step in the dark night, stunned. He would have been quite happy if he had got ninepence, God help him. When I was a boy, I remember how a certain person who embittered my life in those days was wont to say, as though it summed up all the virtues, that such a person was a man who looked at both sides of a shilling before spending it. It is such a sight as the little boy on the step that makes one do the like : that helps one to understand the power there is in a shilling. But many human beings, who can give a shilling rather than take it, are as really beaten as the little boy. They too have got their bags, filled with no matter what. Perhaps poetry, perhaps metaphysics, perhaps magazine articles, perhaps sermons. They thought they would find a market, and sell these at a great profit : but they found none. They have fallen down a stair ; and broken their leg and bruised

their head. And now, in a moral sense, they have sat down in the dark on a step: and though not crying, are gazing about them blankly.

Perhaps you are one of them.

(1864.)

## VIII.

### A LONG LOOK-OUT.

WHETHER the phrase be good English or not, I do not know. The writer is always in fear that he may fall into Scotticisms of expression. But Scotticisms, though not good English, are not provincialisms : Scotland is not a province, after all ; though its capital, doubtless, is London. And there are more Scotsmen in London than in Edinburgh. Yet Scotticisms are pardonable in a Scot, who sees England rarely, and then hurriedly. Nearly five years are gone since the writer looked on an English landscape or entered a cathedral church. And these words express a great privation. Life, too, cannot contain many more periods of five years.

In any case, it was in England, long ago, that the phrase grew familiar : *A Long Look-out*. It was often on the lips of a good man, gone for many years. It commonly expressed a sorrowful fact. Coming back to school after the brief holidays, very miserable, and taking tooth and nail to the hardest work under the impression common to boys of fifteen that thus the dreary year would faster go away, and the longed-for return to the distant home come round ; it fell very blankly on one to be told that there was no need for such feverish eagerness : it was a long look-out to the next summer. All this, however, is neither here

nor there. It is all gone by: and it has nothing earthly to do with the subject of the present dissertation. For the thesis now to be maintained is that a long look-out is demanded by the healthy human mind: that, in fact, we cannot do without it, though the sense of our necessity is commonly latent: that we cannot do with a look-out any shorter than one which has no limit at all; that the prospect must be absolutely unbounded, or we may as well knock our heads at once against the enclosing wall.

There are those who are aware, hour by hour, that they cannot enjoy at all anything which is present, unless they know that the future is provided for too. What is to come next, and next again, is a question always pressing on them. They must have things arranged a good way ahead; or what is now is unsatisfying.

De Quincey tells us that what he enjoyed most through some of his earlier years, was the season of short days and long dark nights, when he had the long evening undisturbed among his books. But it was not enough that he had at present these enjoyable nights, when it was so black and dreary all round his dwelling, and the solitary student sat in the pleasant lamp-light and fire-light in his 'room seventeen by twelve, and not more than seven and a half feet high,' surrounded by his beloved five thousand volumes. He could not relish a winter night unless he had a good thick wall of dark nights between him and the encroaching light of the lengthening day: and accordingly November and December were the months during which 'happiness was in season.' For besides the warm present, there was what may by comparison be called the long look-out.

Mr. Ruskin told us lately that having reached (was it?) fifty-three years, he cannot look with the old enjoy-

ment at the setting sun. It seems to sink down so fast. As the gentle Lyte wrote when he had less than De Quincey's two months before him altogether, 'fast falls the even-tide.' And though Mr. Ruskin has probably not lost the power of enjoying that natural beauty which no one ever described more eloquently, yet the intruding thought that he cannot see it very much longer embitters all. The present lovely colours of the Western sky require, to their due appreciation, that you should have the latent sense within you that you may see them again an indefinite number of times. To say a hundred times more, a thousand times more, a million times more, will not do. The prospect must be limitless. Of course, a large definite number conveys to many minds the feeling of unlimited extent and duration. One summer day, years ago, entering a gateway between great red sandstone pillars, and walking along a pleasant avenue under great trees with a little stream brawling by, the writer found the master of that leafy domain of peacefulness standing on a bit of turf transcending all velvet, in front of his beautiful abode. His years were seventy-two: he was a kind good old man: it may gratify some readers to know that he was very rich. I see the shafts of sunshine coming through the thick boughs, making the turf a blaze of verdant gold. 'What a lovely place you have got,' were the first words of greeting that came naturally. But the old man sadly shook his head, and replied, 'Ah, if one could have a nine hundred and ninety-nine years' lease of it!' For such is the term of a contract meant to endure for ever, North of the Tweed. By North of the Tweed, I mean in Scotland: for not the Tweed only, but all Northumberland, lies far to the Northward of pleasant Galloway. But the nine hundred and ninety-nine years, thus said, meant

Eternity. The hundred years of Faustus conveyed to Faustus, when he made his wretched bargain, that same inexhaustible duration. As it was, Faustus was a madman. But had the brevity of his century been taken in, he would have been an idiot. Which estate is the more degrading. A distinguished Professor of Theology in a great University (by a great University I mean one with two thousand students in residence) once said to the writer, with great feeling, 'There is something grand in being a madman: but there is nothing grand about being a fool.'

To return, there are men who in all little personal and domestic arrangements must plan ahead. When they take a dress suit into daily wear, they must get another and lay it up in their wardrobe, against the time when the present one shall be worn-out, or grow shabby. Even so in the respect of boots: always two pairs, never worn, in reserve. A careful soul of a housewife, dwelling in a little country dwelling, far from the town, advised a newly-married wife 'always to have an extra pair of chickens.' Some people are uneasy unless they have a great store of letter-paper and envelopes and postage stamps: pens, tapers, sealing-wax. You remember Sydney Smith's lemon-bag. Squeezing one, he had the prospect of several more, in waiting. And not pleasanter used to be the hearty glow of the wood fire on winter evenings long ago, than the sight of the neat billets of well-seasoned oak ranged on the hearth, waiting their turn to give forth the imprisoned sunshine of immemorial ages gone.

You may say it is morbid, this continual prevision of the future. It is certainly 'taking thought for the morrow,' and making the day that is passing over one bear the burden of several days. But here is a case in which right and wrong are eminently matters of

degree. To be always planning far ahead may bring a burden of many needless fears. John Parker told me many times how anxious he felt as to what should become of *Fraser's Magazine* when his father should die. But the father long survived the son. On the other hand, to sit still idly, and wait for something to turn up, for things to come round, is despicable. Worse still is the behaviour of the selfish human animal who cheerfully spends his whole income, making not the smallest provision for his children after he dies. Several degrees of additional aggravation are manifest when the brute declares that he does all this because he has so firm faith that Providence will take care of the poor little things. Lictors, bring forth the Knout! Exhibit the vile hypocrite, and permit me to lay on. Terrible sounds shall be heard, as of a brute in pain. Doubtless the look-out desired may become too long. If a man could not be happy unless he had ten pairs of boots in reserve, all fresh from the maker; or twelve suits of clothes and six greatcoats, all unworn: the man is wrong. He is approximating to the condition of one, known to me in childhood, who had seventy thousand a year, but was oppressed with fears lest his means should fail him; of another, who durst not travel by railway, even a very short journey. But if the fear of the awful Future were morbid, what then? You do not help a man over it, by telling him it is so. The morbid condition is a fact, and cannot be ignored: is not made powerless, like an evil spirit, when recognised and named. There are people who would say to man or woman, shrinking painfully from doing something needful, 'Come, that's morbid: Don't yield to it:' as though the hapless mortal's feeling were unreal, fanciful, voluntary. You might just as well and wisely say to one with a painfully inflamed tooth,

‘Press hard upon it: Don’t mind it or feel it: the thing is morbid, and you must not yield to it.’ As wisely say, ‘Walk manfully with that broken leg. Don’t give in!’ Morbidness is a reality, and a terrible reality; and you need not pretend to shut your eyes to it. You may help a human being out of it: you may cure him of it: but do not think to drive the dead-lame horse as though it were sound. Wherefore let it be recognised that, be this craving for a lengthened prospect morbid or not, it is a fact in human nature. And you must just make the best of it.

I have said already that nearly every human being is less or more in a morbid condition. Almost every man is what if he were a horse would be called a screw. I was sure of that, long ago: I am still surer, now. Having expatiated on the thought, not wholly a discouraging thought, I need not do so again as touching the general statement. Only let it be said that in no respect is it so touchingly pressed upon one, as in respect to the fears for the future which are in many good men and women. And the shadow begins to come over us early. When a little boy comes to be sure that you really understand him and sympathise with him, he will confide to you his many fears. There are great strong lads, with no nervous system and not much brain, who (happily for themselves) have none. But you will find quiet thoughtful little fellows who (after long acquaintance and having become sure of you) will tell you what an effort it is to go to school each morning. They go in vague alarm: alarm which on many days proves not to have been groundless. It is the thought of certain small pale faces which would make the writer (if fate permitted) thrash the brutal school-bully with even greater alacrity and gusto than the beast who does

not insure his life, already named. No purer enjoyment could be vouchsafed the writer than the opportunity to remove considerable portions of the skin of certain of his fellow-creatures. I recall a sentence in a sermon by a very popular preacher. 'Who,' exclaimed he, with blazing eyes, 'could see a great hulking fellow abusing a helpless woman or a little child, without being filled with *the holy desire to kick the coward?*' Well said, my eloquent friend!

There are folk, surely exceptive folk, who are quite content if the want of the present moment be supplied. And it seems as though, for rational beings, this were the most morbid state of all. It is very well for a cow, lying on the grass on a pleasant day when there are no flies, to chew the cud in tranquil enjoyment of the present, looking neither before nor after. The like may be said of our fellow-creature the pig, which loves to lie in the sun, devoid of all ambition. Nor need it be denied that mortal men with lined faces, heavy hearts, and anxious minds, have stood with their hands in their pockets beside such animals, and thought that it might not be amiss to change places. It sometimes seems that the dignity (if that be the word) of human nature is dearly bought. The higher in the scale of being, the greater the capacity of suffering. Henry Fielding, we are told by 'the charming Mary Montagu,' forgot every evil when in the presence of a venison pasty and a flask of champagne. But, genius as Fielding was, who sorted English words into sentences as felicitously as ever that was done in prose, he was (or Carlyle has prophesied in vain) morally a failure. Robert Burns, a greater and better man (in the writer's insignificant judgment), has pictured in memorable words the case of one who by inexpensive means could be lifted up to an elevation where troubles

could not pluck at him with any effect. Happiness was cheap in Ayrshire about the end of the eighteenth century. It is curious, passing along the narrow street, to look at the little ale-house abiding still: to think of the shabby little room inside: to think of a distilled drink which but for the exactions of a tyrannical excise might be had for about four-pence a quart, half-a-pint of which being imbibed could lift up a great genius above all earthly sorrows. Not for long, doubtless: and next morning would bring its painful reckoning: while a few years of such usage would be so resented by the mucous membrane that that marvellous organism would refuse to work on, and bid the entire machine, corporeal and mental, stop for what we here call *this side of time*. But only from personal experience of a divine exhilaration and exaltation could the usually quiet and sad Robert have written thus:

The storm without might rair and rustle,  
Tam didna mind the storm a whustle.  
Care, mad to see a man sae happy,  
E'en drown'd himsel' amang the nappy.  
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,  
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious !

Now, that is very fine. I am proud, as I write it, to be a native of the same country-side as Burns. 'Rantin' rovin' Robin,' the thoughtful and melancholy genius called himself, fancying it would have been a fine thing if he had been so. But poor Burns's rantin' was entirely analogous to Dickens's glorification of eating and drinking, of which he had a moral enjoyment and no other. Mr. Fields, kindest and best among his American friends, tells us that after Dickens had expatiated on the joys of punch, and insisted that it should be made, when the punch was actually made he took less of it than

any one else did. But, rantin' or not as Robin might be, you see very readily that Tam o' Shanter's exaltation above all worldly trouble was only the state of one who never quite forgot the wolves outside, though he had been able to shut the door in their face for a little. It was the kind of jollity which makes one pity a man as much as any sorrow: it was the hysterical laughter which is very close to tears. And Burns did not last so long as even Fielding did. The fatal Thirty-seven, which has seen the end of so many of the most gifted of the race, took him away. Byron; Mendelssohn; Raphael on the very birthday; Toplady who wrote *Rock of Ages*, which was doing at least one good thing; Alexander Smith, another Ayrshire poet; occur to one's memory at once. Let it be forgotten that the brutal and bloody Judge Jefferies died at thirty-eight. Most people are surprised when told it. The general impression is that he was so bad that he must have been at least sixty-five.

All that has been said down to this point is to be esteemed as introductory to a question now to be put to each reader of this page. I wish to know if people in general are aware of this feeling of the necessity of a longer look-out in a graver matter. Do you, reader, really feel that you could bear up in the matter of the relationships of family and of affection, if you did not believe in a future life? Could you stand it, if you were assured that none of us will ever live again after death, as individuals conscious and reminiscent: and that the parting at death must be the final and last farewell? Because some people could not stand it. In all true and deep affection, in all intercourse with those we really care for, there is the latent conviction that this is

never to end. That this is so is made plain by the frightful shock with which the suggestion of parting for ever is received by anybody worth talking about. *That* is not to be. It is resolutely put away. Beyond this life there must be the reserve of another: or this will not do. Mr. John Stuart Mill was a great man: but nature and a most unhappy training had made him an entirely exceptive man. You cannot reason from him to anybody else. It does not in the least degree follow that because he thought and felt in any special way, therefore any other mortal would so think or feel. He says he believes the time might come to any of us in which we could thankfully lie down to take our everlasting rest, in unconsciousness, in annihilation. Possibly that might be. The gathering weariness which made Nathaniel Hawthorne say he did not wish, when he died, to waken up to immortality at once, but rather for a deep sleep of at least a thousand years, being a little aggravated, might grow into the wish never to waken up again at all. But I do not believe that it is possible to see one dear die, or to think of one dear to you dying, and to be content never to meet again. However little likely it looks; and God knows that to our senses and even to our reasonings it looks most awfully unlikely; we must believe in a future life, in which every person we ever cared for is to be good, to be happy.

There are two-legged animals, of human pretension, with whom this seems not to be so. But apart from the accursed heartlessness which may be fostered in some natures by a gloomy religious creed, I believe that the true explanation of these animals is, that they have not imagination, or whatever it is to be called, to understand what is meant by the words in which they express their belief. A dignified

clergyman told me that an old woman once called on him, a parishioner, and sitting down by his study fire, cheerfully told him that her son was just dead, and had gone to hell. Her idea of that place was an enlargement and intensification of the study fire. Indeed it is recorded that a well-meaning preacher, going to see a great steam-engine, thought to impress the stokers by pointing to the huge fires under the boilers, and asking 'What does that remind you of?' The good clergyman, not a little startled, said that he trusted the poor son, however little he might have looked like it, might have so repented of his ill-doings as not to have come to that awful condition; but the old woman grimly put away the hopeful suggestion and clung to her first statement as to the present state of the child she bore. Then my friend went on to say that if this were certain it must surely be a dreadful matter of reflection to the mother, and that he wondered much to see her looking so cheerful. 'Not at all,' replied the grim old Christian. At first she was vexed by thinking of her son, but now she was perfectly happy; because she was sure it was all for the glory of God. At this point my informant paused, and silently shook his head. 'Now was that hypocrisy or was it want of heart?' was the natural inquiry that followed. 'Neither;' was the wise and good man's reply. 'It was just that she did not know the meaning of the words she said.'

It is very wonderful how the absolute need there is in average humanity for a longer look-out than is afforded by this life, and for a reserve allotment or provision of life beyond the one which is present, has constrained humanity to cling to the vague hope of immortality through ages when there was absolutely no reason whatsoever for cherishing that hope. For it is not a reason for holding any belief, merely

that we should be destitute beyond all words did we not hold it. And, apart from the express assertion of Divine revelation, I never saw any argument for the immortality of the soul which could not be most easily answered and refuted. To say that what thinks and feels must be immaterial, and that what is immaterial cannot cease to exist, assumes at least two propositions which are incapable of proof, and if good for anything, is as good to prove the immortality of a dog as of a man. If reason and affection can never be products of matter, then a shepherd's dog has an immaterial soul. I am far from saying that it has not: I believe it has. And I do not know whether or not it is to live for ever. Then, if a future life be needed to redress the evils of this, and another world to set this right, I should say that the sufferings of cab-horses and of vivisected dogs demand compensation as vehemently as those of any man. And I suppose no mortal now supposes that there is argument in the lines in *The Minstrel*, which ask, 'Shall I be left forgotten in the dust, When fate, relenting, lets the flowers revive?' If there be argument in the analogy suggested, it looks just the other way. The individual flowers never come back. They are gone for ever. It is as though the stock of humanity put forth its successive crops, its successive generations, but the individual being came just for once and then was done with. And as for the suggestion that a good Power above us could never permit us to cherish a hope of immortality and then disappoint it, what says our daily history to that? Is there a more familiar feeling in our hearts than the bitterest disappointment? Why not one more, the bitterest to anticipate: but from its nature one that if it be appointed to us can never be felt? Farther than the blank absence of reasons for the belief in a

future life, there are against it the strongest unlikelihoods. The soul seems to grow and strengthen as the body grows and strengthens ; it seems to weaken and decay as the body weakens and decays. It seems to be gradually extinguished. Feeling goes : consciousness, and thought, and affection : a lifeless lump is left, and *that* soon goes back to the elements. The doctrine is, that this spiritual principle which has faded away, is to start fresh somewhere else : where we do not know, how we do not know : no one has ever come back to tell us anything. In another place, perhaps far away, and of necessity in a very different mode of life, the soul is to begin again. Now, notwithstanding Bishop Butler, this is not in the analogy of things : it is a case wholly without parallel. It does not look likely. And there come many times in which it does not feel likely. That *Animula, vagula, blandula*, does not feel like lasting for ever. What is within, call it what you may, is often so weak, so weary, that it is not like going on, century after century, millennium after millennium. It is rather like going out altogether. It is a feeble spark, surely, to bear the blasts and buffets of unknown eternity. And yet in the presence of all that has been said, I hold by this : that we are so made that we MUST believe there is a future life. Everybody does believe in it. The most desolate teacher of materialism, who tells us that when the brain decomposes the individual man is blotted out and annihilated, does not believe it himself. He could not hourly look at his wife and children if he did. Unless he were utterly heartless, a brute, the most inferior of all inferior animals, he would hasten to blow his brains out. 'Not to be, is best of all,' if his unspeakably wretched message were true. But even he, unconsciously, has his reserve life beyond the present day going over :

and his longer look-out. And it is in this wise. He puts away the idea that he himself, that his wife and children, are ever ~~to~~ to die. He does not, hourly, remember, looking at the tired companion of many anxious years, that one or other must see the other dying, must see the other dead. Because, to most folk, the Indefinite is as the Infinite. Where no end is plainly seen, it is as though there were no end at all. And, never admitting the thought that his life will end, this life becomes to the materialist as eternity. He gets the longer look-out, without which we cannot live, but shutting his eyes to facts and forgetting them. Such is the only possible explanation of the materialist's capability to live on. If it were only himself: if he were a solitary recluse, dwelling in his lonely study, and labouring on without companionship; he might actually hold the belief he imagines he holds. But if he be a man who has formed domestic ties, he has done something more than give hostages to fortune. He has placed himself where Faith has got him (God be thanked) in her grip. He believes an immense deal, without knowing that he does. What he repudiates with his pen, has got tight hold of his heart. And, as sure as he lives a few years longer, he will be delivered from the cheerless desolation of his nominal creed; and will quietly, thankfully, and of necessity, believe as we believe. The solitary Hume, as Henry Mackenzie tells us, in his latter days 'wished he had never doubted.' If he had had a wife and six children, day by day and year by year by him as he grew old, one or two going before him from this world, he would gradually but wholly have ceased to doubt. It will not do. And in this world there is no surer condemnation of any doctrine or conduct, than that it will not do. The beliefs which men hold most tenaciously and most prac-

tically, they do not reason themselves into. They grow into them. . . .

. . . As for the fact of the departure from this existing state, all that need be said is that it is for the most part as different as may be from the fictitious descriptions of it. Most human beings pass very quietly and unaffectedly. And rather with little allusions, more or less direct, to the further out-look, than with much explicit talk about it. Just yesterday a lad of twenty-one, well known to the writer, went: being perfectly clear to the last. Feeling that the end was close by, he asked for his little brothers and sisters, and kissed each of them, saying only 'Good-bye.' Last, he took his father's hand, and said, 'Good-bye, father, we'll meet again.' That was all. A little since, a lad of twenty, also well known to me, died. He left a widowed mother, a sister and two brothers, younger than himself. He had been full of anxieties as to what should come of them. His last words were, holding the hand of the brother next himself in years, 'Try and do as weel's ye can.' Too weary to say more, surely he said enough. Twenty years since, I was waiting by the bed-side of a poor fellow, a working man, dying. He was thirty-two, and had four little children. After lying silent for a while, he said he would like to see them, and the poor wife brought them to his bed-side. He could speak quite distinctly, though the change came in an hour; and I thought he would try to say something of parting advice, were it only to bid them be good children and kind to their mother; yet all he did was just to shake each of the three elder children by the hand, and to say *Gude-day*. As for the youngest, a wee thing of two years old, he said to it, 'Will ye gie me a bit kiss?' and the mother lifted up the wondering

child to do so. 'Say ta-ta to your faither,' she said. 'Ta-ta,' said the little boy, in a loud, cheerful voice, and then ran out of the cottage to play with some companions. Then poor David closed his eyes, and some tears ran down his cheek. But he said no more. Thus homely Scots die.

(1878.)

## IX.

NORMAN MACLEOD.

POOR relations, it is well understood, know all about their rich relations: but the rich relations know very little about the poor. So it is that all educated folk in Scotland (Sydney Smith's *knuckle-end of England*) know all about England, while educated folk in England are, even yet, many times profoundly ignorant of all things Scotch. So it is that all men of fair culture among the clergy of the Church of Scotland are well up in their knowledge of the Church of England, while the typical Anglican knows and cares extremely little about the Scotch Church. There are exceptions. The Dean of Westminster,\* always much interested in any ecclesiastical curiosity, is very fully informed as to the history, constitution, and *personnel* of the National Establishment in Scotland: and the Archbishop of Canterbury, brought up in her communion, is still in various respects (to a Scotch eye) visibly influenced by his Presbyterian upbringing. An exalted Personage, too, vulgarly esteemed as the earthly Head of the Anglican Church, has become, by more than twenty years' experience, a warm and well-informed friend of the Church of her Northern kingdom. Still, English interest in Scotch ecclesiastical affairs is cool. All

\* Stanley.

this the writer feels, with some sense of disheartening, as he begins his brief account of the greatest man who has been numbered among the Scotch clergy for many a day and year.

Yet if any clergyman of the Church of Scotland in recent times has broken beyond the provincial limit of reputation, it is Norman Macleod. It is little known in England how extraordinary a man he was, and how singular was his standing in his own country. I wish I could carry some impression of what manner of man he was to those who shall read these pages.

His place in Scotland was unlike that of any other man among its three millions and a half. His Christian name was a household word. Nobody in Scotland talked of *Dr. Macleod*. It was always *Norman*. On February 8, 1876, a letter appeared in the *Glasgow Herald*, written evidently by a clever working-man, upon the vexed question of piece-work. Something must be done, the writer says, towards drawing masters and men together and making them understand each other: and he ends his letter with the vain wish, 'O for Norman back again!' A clergyman entering a sick-room found an old woman reading a tract. She said 'One of Norman's.' A St. Andrews professor, travelling from Edinburgh to London, was waiting on the platform at Carstairs when the Glasgow part of the train came in. 'Is Norman in the train?' was his inquiry of the guard. 'Yes,' was the reply: 'here he is.' I have just read a published letter from a domestic servant. In it are the words 'the late Norman Macleod: a man whom I never saw, but when I read the account of his death, I felt a blank in my life.' There is no exaggeration in these things. To a Scotsman they are mere matters of course. He was a great jolly Christian Bohemian, using the most unconventional language freely in his talk, sitting with

the Prince of Wales\* in the smoking-room at Dunrobin till half-past three in the morning, yet never sinking below the highest level of the respect of even such as knew him most familiarly: of a happy, unanxious nature, intensely enjoying the moral and physical good things of this life, scenery, society, music, books, dinner. 'Dined jollily,' you read in his diary: and the word *jolly* is of frequent occurrence. It was the right word, and true, till overwork and failing health at the close brought the first touches of depression. Then, beneath this, there was the substantial nature of the great preacher, the zealous missioner, the sympathetic visitor of the sick and poor, the devoted parish priest: the man who crowded into his life thrice the actual work of many a busy man. He was a great moral dynamic power: his contagious energy and heartiness could push on even the most inert: he could 'galvanise a divvot,' which in English is a piece of turf, and in Scotch means such-like a mortal man. He was a wonderfully eloquent and impressive preacher: 'the greatest and most convincing preacher I ever heard,' was the estimate of Sir Arthur Helps, whose opinion was worth something. The solitary one among Scotch divines who was commonly placed before him was Dr. Caird, Principal of the University of Glasgow, who for thirty years has stood without question first among Scotch preachers. Guthrie and Macleod you would bracket as equal. Still more remarkable was his power as a platform speaker. When a great meeting of people was getting very tired, through many long-winded and remarkably sensible orations, he had but to rise, and instantly attention was keen, and there was life everywhere. Norman Macleod was never dull: that could not be in the nature of things. And you felt you were getting a tremendous push in the

\* Later, Edward VII.

direction in which he wanted to make you to go. His speech was always kept to the last : no one need think to speak after him. I have heard him preach and speak many times : I never knew him make a failure : and sometimes, at the call of a great occasion, I have seen him produce on a great multitude an impression which I cannot imagine as exceeded by human words. It is no wonder that Dean Stanley longed for the day when Macleod might preach in the nave of some vast cathedral. Like all Scotch clergymen of any account, he loved the Anglican Church as his own : and it might well have been. But it was not to be.

The spontaneous and incessant flow of lively, pathetic, and humorous thought from him was wonderful. You could not talk with him for five minutes without discerning that here was an exceptional man. If you met him on the street, while his high health continued, he had something bright and brief to say : and he did not repeat himself. Latterly, indeed, you saw the pump at work : it was hard to daily meet scores of men, each of whom expected something uncommon. ‘How’s your liver ? Is it transparent ? Can you read small print through it ?’ was an odd mode of addressing a friend rather than a brilliant one. But it was while sitting up, late at night, in the company of two or three congenial friends that Norman Macleod was at his greatest. The riotous fun, passing momently but never unfitly to the deepest pathos and most solemn reflection,—for his laughter and his tears were never far asunder,—none who witnessed can forget. Like most great orators, he had a strong power of mimicry, and he could represent the most diverse subjects equally well : a Highland drover, and a young guardsman anxious to convey that though he made no loud professions he hoped he had chosen Right,—each was perfect.

The charm of his manner was indescribable: yet there was no more courtly gentleman than the life-enjoying Celt, no more earnest preacher and believer than he who returning from a mission to America first made known in Scotland the unsolemn lay of *Old Dan Tucker*. It was extraordinary, how he passed from the profoundest tragedy to the wildest merriment: and both were very real. After one of his great speeches, in which he seemed possessed of apostolic zeal for some good cause, and was indeed so possessed, he could speedily let the bow unbend. I heard him end a grand missionary address to students by saying with a faltering voice that if that work broke down 'some of us will be glad to find a grave.' There he stopped: and dead silence followed, not untouched with unaccustomed tears. Ten minutes after he was saying in the liveliest fashion to a friend, 'I have got some splendid weeds: come down to-night and try them.' But indeed in the pulpit, on the platform, in the general assembly, in his back-study (an extraordinary place in a laundry where he sought escape from ceaseless interruption), or in the smoking room, you could not say where he was greatest: but you felt that everywhere he was a streaming fountain of influence, and a man among a million men.

For the last twenty-one years of his life he held (as he records in his diary with due thankfulness) the best living in Scotland: after all, not £1200 a year. It was the Barony parish of Glasgow, with a population of near 100,000 souls. This parish has its church under the shadow of Glasgow Cathedral: but the Reformation brought some losses with its gains, and it is related that the last Lord Derby, issuing from the Cathedral, was transfixed by the sight of the Barony church, but after some delay exclaimed,

‘ Well, I once saw an uglier church than that.’ He did not say where. It would be interesting to know. In this hideous erection Norman Macleod preached : always to a great congregation. He organised parochial machinery, he built churches, he pleaded eloquently and effectively for every good work : he made his presence felt through Glasgow, through Scotland : he was the greatest Scotsman living his life in Scotland, at the time he died. Many thousands remember him vividly now : the manly presence of the big life-enjoying man : the powerful voice with the strong Gaelic accent that told of Morven and the misty islands : and the portraits given in the biography bring him back as if he lived to such as knew him well. But in a few years there will remain only a fading tradition of what-like he was and how he preached and talked ; and those who read his works will wonder wherein lay the magical charm of Norman.

He was born at Campbeltown, a little town in a remote part of Argyleshire, on June 3, 1812. His father, a man of great ability and magnificent physique, was incumbent of the parish : but was soon translated to the living of Campsie, near Glasgow. In the University of that city Norman was educated. He was always vivaciously clever, but made no figure in University work : he had not the nature for that kind of eminence : and, like most clever lads who could not by any effort have attained University honours, he professed to hold them cheap. But it was well for Macleod that his student-life was what it was. His genius owed little to University training ; he had no pretension to scholarship, but his reading was wide, if desultory : his knowledge extensive, though inaccurate : and he saved his energies through those years in which many brilliant scholars undermine their constitution, entering practical life early-old. He was tutor

in a Yorkshire family for several years ; and with his pupil lived for some time at Weimar. Here he ' was passionately fond of music, sang well to the guitar, sketched cleverly, was as keen a waltzer as any *attaché* in Weimar, and threw himself with a vivid sense of enjoyment into the gaieties of the little capital.' Here, too, he so far broke the bonds of a Scotch training as to write, more than forty years since, with much contempt of ' being obliged to have his piety measured by reading a newspaper on Sunday, or such trash.' While finishing his studies for the Church, he saw the shadows of coming events in Scotland. He writes, in 1835,

' Our very clergy are dragging us down to lick the dust, and the influence of the mob is making our young men a subservient set of fellows. I see among our better-thinking clergy a strong Episcopalian spirit : they are beginning to see the use of a set form of worship. And who can look at the critical, self-sufficient faces of one-half of our congregations during prayers, and the labour and puffing and blowing of some aspirant to a church, and not deplore the absence of some set prayers which would keep the feelings of many right-thinking Christians from being hurt every Sabbath ? '

At the same time he took part in resisting a preposterous proposal on the part of some narrow-minded students of divinity to turn *Blackwood's Magazine* out of the Divinity-Hall Library, from which they had already excluded the *Edinburgh Review*. It may seem incredible : but these ears have heard an eminent Scotch clergyman declare that ' no one who knew the truth as it is in Jesus could read Shakespeare.' Says Macleod,

' Poor Maga was peppered with a whole volley of anathemas : and if it were not for some fellows of sense who were determined to give old Christopher a

lift on his stilts, he would have hobbled down the turnpike stair to make room for a dripping Baptist or oily-haired Methodist. Oh, I hate cant : I detest it, from my heart of hearts !'

His first living was the parish of Loudoun, in Ayrshire. The parishioners did not want him by any means, having set their affections upon somebody else. But he speedily overcame any existing prejudice, and won the people's hearts. Many instances are recorded which show the terms of friendship on which he stood to the Hastings family. When one of the daughters was married to the Marquis of Bute, Macleod performed the ceremony. Of that union sprang the prototype, in vulgar belief, of *Lothair*. Another sister was the well-known Lady Flora Hastings. A curious fashion of that family was (as may be seen in great printed volumes) to use, in writing of their father, the capital letters at the beginning of pronouns which people in general employ only in the case of the Divine Persons in the Trinity. It may be hoped that the fashion will never become general : the effect on the reader (unconnected with the family) is painful in the extreme. In 1843, Norman was translated to the parish of Dalkeith ; and in 1851 he was appointed to the Barony parish of Glasgow : in that great charge, and holding the most prominent place in the second city of the empire, Macleod found his right place, and never left it. What a Bishop he would have been ! But the Scotch Church has no such dignities, and he had reached the end of his tether. The little dignities of the Deanery of the Thistle and the Chaplaincy to the Queen, followed by-and-by. These have, of late years, been on the whole given very justly : but never with more general approval than when given to Norman.

In the autumn of 1843, the writer, then a boy,

heard Norman preach for the first time. It was in a country church in Ayrshire, on a Fast-day. The congregation was tired and sleepy, having already heard a most dreary discourse. Norman ascended the pulpit, looking (I thought then) very like some of the portraits of Byron. The Collect before sermon at once aroused the people. It was not couched in liturgical phrase, such as may now be heard in Scotch churches, the result of what old-fashioned clergymen call 'the *Prayer Movement*.' But the words come back, and the tone, and the silent hush in the church: 'Teach us to remember that for every sermon we hear, we must render an account at the Day of Judgment.' It was plainly a new suggestion: the people had never bargained for *that*. Then came the sermon, which was, I think, the very first I ever listened to from beginning to end. I could give an accurate account of it to-day. The sorest consequences to the Church of the secession of 1843 were in the deplorable appointments made in some cases to the charges vacated by eminent men who 'went out.' It would be invidious to mention some; but it would be remarkably easy. And it is much to be regretted that Macleod went to Dalkeith, declining an Edinburgh charge to which he was presented. Things would have been very different: not in that parish only, but through all the Scotch metropolis: where the departure of the out-goers, grievous loss as it was, was a far less heavy blow to the Establishment than the entrance of certain of the incomers. However, Dalkeith is near Edinburgh: and whenever it was known that Norman was to preach or speak there, or in Glasgow, eager crowds assembled. In 1860 came *Good Words*, which he edited. How the streets of Glasgow were placarded with the notices that it was to begin! The immense energy of the

publisher, Mr. Strahan : the large publicity given by advertising to an unprecedented degree : the rumours of such payment to authors as had never before been given for periodical writing : excited interest, and gradually secured a vast circulation. Norman wrote a great deal in this Magazine : gradually emancipating his style from that of a Scotch sermon, and attaining one of a higher literary character. But it was not here that his strength lay. His life went on in a ceaseless round of preaching, speech-making, church-building, pastoral work, foreign travel, social enjoyment ; and his fame spread wider and wider. Being once invited to preach before the Queen \* at Crathie, he left such a remembrance of him that henceforward he was perpetually there during her Majesty's visits ; and he became by degrees (as letters in his biography equally honourable to all parties show) a trusted and valued friend. The character of his theology changed insensibly : becoming what for lack of a better name may be called Broad : though he ever clung with firm faith to the main facts and truths of the Christian religion. A great event in his life, and a painful experience, was the outcry which followed a speech he made in the Presbytery of Glasgow on the observance of the Lord's Day, and its authority. The speech was of near four hours' length : no full record of it remains : but those who heard it still say that it was most startling to hear ; and assuredly it roused the country when it was read as reported in the newspapers. As to the observance of the day, probably the ground taken is that now generally taken by educated people. But the views set forth as to its authority seemed very strange to most Scotch folk. The binding authority of the fourth commandment was flatly denied : the obligation of the day was made

\* Victoria.

to rest on its manifest advantages and long sacred associations ; and in the orator's eagerness, the other nine Commandments seemed to be held as cheap as the Fourth. It need not be said that the higher morality of the New Testament, and its eternal obligation, were strongly recognised. But all this passed the understanding of many decent people. I once heard a simple clergyman say, 'The best answer to Norman's speech is to go out to his house and take away his silver spoons.' Norman's influence seemed gone. He was furiously abused, sorrowfully mourned over : much prayed for, and much cursed, both commonly by the same individuals. 'Ministers of the Gospel passed him without recognition : *one of these, more zealous than the rest, hissed him on the street.*' This last statement seems incredible,—but only to English people. Every spiteful, envious little creature thought that now was the chance of a kick at a great man. Apart from bigotry and folly, the case was difficult. Macleod had plainly contradicted the articles of his Church : and there were those who would have been willing to depose and turn out the strongest man in it. 'I suppose there is room enough for him without,' I heard a dignified clergyman say in a Church-court : and the truculent suggestion of another was that 'Execution should be done.' But worthier thoughts prevailed : and the Presbytery of Glasgow, by an act of wise tolerance, while it could not pass by without notice an unquestionable infraction of the standards, was content to record its regret that so eminent a clergyman should have set out views which appeared unorthodox, and its hope that he would not do it any more. Norman would retract nothing. They did not ask him. And the conclusion was in the highest degree creditable to the really wise and good men who swayed the councils of that Court.

‘ Their admonition was not pronounced but recorded. And I said that it was interesting as being probably the last which should be addressed to any minister of the Church for teaching as I did, and that I would show it some day to my son as an ecclesiastical fossil. They only smiled, and said he would never discover it. All was good humour.’

Honour to the tolerant, wise, and kindly Presbytery of Glasgow ! Could an illustrious law-breaker have been let more easily down ? And law-breaker he was beyond doubt.

Of the multitude of squibs, in prose and verse, which the occasion brought forth, by far the best known to the writer appeared in a little publication called *The Comet*, published in the University of St. Andrews, and written by the students. It was written, of course, by an admirer \* of Norman, and it cleverly hit off the sum of his moral teaching, in the vulgarer and stupider minds. It began

Have you heard of valiant Norman,  
Norman of the ample vest,—  
How he fought the Ten Commandments,  
In the Synod of the West ?

It went on to personify the Decalogue as a vague and awful Beast, much like the Jabberwock of the renowned ballad. Norman encountered this creature, with much bravery : but the contest was unequal, and he was beaten and swallowed down by it. But even yet, he adhered to his principles, as these are summarised in the compendious statement of his creed with which the poem ends :

Still from out the Monster’s stomach,  
In the choicest Glasgow brogue,  
He is heard to curse the Sabbath,  
And to ban the Decalogue !

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\* The late Lord Lochee, then Edmund Robertson.

I once read the entire romantic legend to the great subject of it. But the pain had been too recent and too sharp: and I regret to say he did not appear to see much fun in it.

Rapid as was Macleod's temporary loss of position, even so rapid was his re-habilitation. Just a year after he had feared the Supreme Court of the Church might depose him, it unanimously asked him to go to India as the Church's ambassador to visit all the missions there: and a year later he was, with a general enthusiasm quite exceptional as to such appointments, placed in its Chair, as Moderator of the General Assembly. By a transparent fiction, to hold this office is commonly spoken of as the highest honour which can befall a Scotch clergyman. It might be so. The college of past Moderators nominates: and it is a strong thing for the Assembly to reject their nominee, however unworthy. Yet in one or two recent instances the thing was nearly done. 'When are you to be Moderator?' was the question once asked at Holyrood of an eminent preacher who soon after attained that dignity. His answer was prompt: 'Never! I never emptied a church: I have filled several, but I never emptied one.' The qualification was lacking which some of his predecessors had in great degree, of unpopularity with the multitude. Macleod's closing address as Moderator was a very noble one.

Some passages are given from a startling sermon on education after death, which very strongly controvert the received belief that 'as the tree falls, so it must lie': and which, if published during Norman's life, would assuredly have got him into greater trouble than even his anti-Sabbath speech. The general idea set forth is one which was perpetually taught by the excellent Erskine of Linlathen. And the endeavours made in many quarters to restore the public worship

of the Scotch Church to greater propriety and dignity, met Macleod's hearty support. It is difficult now to believe that ten years ago, clergymen not suspected of insanity declared that the innovations of kneeling at prayer and standing at praise, and the introduction of the organ into churches, were 'of the instigation of the Devil': and that the most malignant abuse, and all possible persecution, were the lot of the too-enlightened men who favoured these things. . . .

The useful life drew to its too early close. Macleod's was not a constitution to last long: and he had worked it very hard. The visit to India, during which he preached and spoke incessantly, told heavily upon him. He was breaking before he went: but after his return he never seemed the same man. Yet in February, 1872, though much aged and bent, I heard him make at St. Andrews one of the most touching and powerful speeches ever made by man: and in May of the same year, with the end now quite close at hand, he made his last speech in the General Assembly, which by common consent of those who heard it was his greatest. But it was a dying effort: his exhaustion was painful to witness. The speech was made on Thursday, May 30. On Sunday, June 16, he died. And on Thursday, June 20—that day three weeks, he had made his great speech of near two hours to a breathless multitude—he was laid to rest in the Churchyard of Campsie, amid such marks of public mourning as had not been seen in Scotland for many a year.

(1876.)

## X.

### CONCERNING SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS; WITH SOME THOUGHTS UPON THE SWING OF THE PENDULUM.\*

‘I HAVE eaten up all the grounds of my tea,’ said, many years since, in my hearing, in modest yet triumphant tones, a little girl of seven years old. I have but to close my eyes, and I see all that scene again, almost as plainly as ever. Six or seven children (I am one of them) are sitting round a tea-table ; their father and mother are there too ; and an old gentleman, who is (in his own judgment) one of the wisest of men. I see the dining-room, large and low-ceilinged ; the cheerful glow of the autumnal fire ; the little faces in the soft candle-light, for glaring gas was there unknown. There had been much talk about the sinfulness of waste—of the waste of even very little things. The old gentleman, so wise (in his own judgment, and indeed in my judgment at that period), was instilling into the children’s mind some of those lessons which are often impressed upon children by people (I am now aware) of no great wisdom or cleverness. He had dwelt at considerable length

\* For the suggestion of the subject of this essay, and for many valuable hints as to its treatment, I am indebted to the kindness of the Archbishop of Dublin. Indeed, in all that part of the essay which treats of *Secondary Vulgar Errors*, I have done little more than expand and illustrate the skeleton of thought supplied to me by Archbishop Whately.

upon the sinfulness of wasting anything; likewise on the sinfulness of children being particular as to what they should eat. He enforced, with no small solemnity, the duty of children's eating what was set before them without minding whether it was good or not, or at least without minding whether they liked it or not. The poor little girl listened to all that was said, and of course received it all as indubitably true. Waste and difficulty, she saw, were wrong, so she judged that the very opposite of waste and difficulty must be right. Accordingly, she thought she would turn to use something that was very small, but still something that ought not to be wasted. Accordingly, she thought she would show the docility of her taste by eating up something that was very disagreeable. Here was an opportunity at once of acting out the great principles to which she had been listening. And while a boy, evidently destined to be a metaphysician, and evidently possessed of the spirit of resistance to constituted authority whether in government or doctrine, boldly argued that it could not be wicked in him to hate onions, because God had so made him that he did hate onions, and (going still deeper into things) insisted that to eat a thing when you did not want it was wasting it much more truly than it would be wasting it to leave it; the little girl ate up all the grounds left in her teacup, and then announced the fact with considerable complacency.

Very, very natural. The little girl's act was a slight straw showing how a great current sets. It was a fair exemplification of a tendency which is woven into the make of our being. Tell the average mortal that it is wrong to walk on the left side of the road, and in nine cases out of ten he will conclude that the proper thing must be to walk on the

right side of the road ; whereas in actual life, and in almost all opinions, moral, political, and religious, the proper thing is to walk neither on the left nor the right side, but somewhere about the middle. Say to the ship-master, You are to sail through a perilous strait ; you will have the raging Scylla on one hand as you go. His natural reply will be, Well, I will keep as far away from it as possible ; I will keep close by the other side. But the rejoinder must be, No, you will be quite as ill off *there* ; you will be in equal peril on the other side : *there* is Charybdis. What you have to do is to keep at a safe distance from each. In avoiding the one, do not run into the other.

It seems to be a great law of the universe, that Wrong lies upon either side of the way, and that Right is the narrow path between. There are the two ways of doing wrong—Too Much and Too Little. Go to the extreme right hand, and you are wrong ; go to the extreme left hand, and you are wrong too. That you may be right, you have to keep somewhere between these two extremes : but not necessarily in the exact middle. All this, of course, is part of the great fact that in this world Evil has the advantage of Good. It is easier to go wrong than right.

It is very natural to think that if one thing or course be wrong, its reverse must be right. If it be wrong to walk towards the east, surely it must be right to walk towards the west. If it be wrong to dress in black, it must be right to dress in white. It is somewhat hard to say, *Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt*—to declare, as if that were a statement of the whole truth, that *fools mistake reverse of wrong for right*. Fools do so indeed, but not fools only. The average human being, with the most honest intentions, is prone to mistake reverse

of wrong for right. We are fond, by our natural constitution, of broad distinctions—of classifications that put the whole interests and objects of this world to the right-hand and to the left. We long for Aye or No—for Heads or Tails. We are impatient of limitations, qualifications, restrictions. You remember how Mr. Micawber explained the philosophy of income and expenditure, and urged people never to run in debt. *Income*, said he, *a hundred pounds a year*; *expenditure, ninety-nine pounds nineteen shillings*: *Happiness*. *Income, a hundred pounds a year*; *expenditure, a hundred pounds and one shilling*: *Misery*. You see the principle involved is, that if you are not happy, you must be miserable—that if you are not miserable, you must be happy. If you are not any particular thing, then you are its opposite. If you are not For, then you are Against. If you are not black, many men will jump to the conclusion that you are white: the fact probably being that you are gray. If not a Whig, you must be a Tory: in truth, you are a Liberal-Conservative. We desiderate in all things the sharp decidedness of the verdict of a jury—Guilty or Not Guilty. We like to conclude that if a man be not very good, then he is very bad; if not very clever, then very stupid; if not very wise, then a fool; whereas, in fact, the man is probably a curious mixture of good and evil, strength and weakness, wisdom and folly, knowledge and ignorance, cleverness and stupidity.

Let it be here remarked, that in speaking of it as an error to take *reverse of wrong for right*, I use the words in their ordinary sense as generally understood. In common language the *reverse* of a thing is taken to mean the thing at the *opposite end of the scale from it*. Thus, black is the reverse of white, bigotry of latitudinarianism, malevolence of benevolence, parsimony of extravagance, and the like. Of

course, in strictness, these things are not the *reverse* of one another. In strictness, the reverse of wrong always is right ; for, to speak with severe precision, the reverse of steering upon *Scylla* is simply *not steering upon Scylla* ; the reverse of *being extravagant* is not *being parsimonious*—it is simply *not being extravagant* ; the reverse of *walking eastward* is not *walking westward*—it is simply *not walking eastward*. And that may include standing still, or walking to any point of the compass except the east. But I understand the *reverse of a thing* as meaning the *opposite extreme* from it. And you see, the Latin words quoted above are more precise than the English. It is severely true, that *while fools think to shun error on one side, they run into the contrary error*—i.e., the error that lies equi-distant, or nearly equi-distant, on the other side of the line of right.

One class of the errors into which men are prone to run under this natural impulse are those which have been termed *Secondary Vulgar Errors*. A *vulgar error*, you will understand, my reader, does not by any means signify an error into which only the vulgar are likely to fall. It does not by any means signify a mistaken belief which will be taken up only by inferior and uneducated minds. A *vulgar error* means an error either in conduct or belief into which *man*, by the make of his being, is likely to fall. Now, people a degree wiser and more thoughtful than the mass, discover that these *vulgar errors* are errors. They conclude that their opposites (i.e., the things at the other extremity of the scale) must be right ; and by running into the opposite extreme they run just as far wrong upon the other side. There is too great a reaction. The twig was bent to the right—they bend it to the left, forgetting that the right thing was that the twig should be straight. If convinced that waste and ‘sauciness’

are wrong, they proceed to eat the grounds of their tea ; if convinced that self-indulgence is wrong, they conclude that hair-shirts and midnight floggings are right ; if convinced that the Church of Rome has too many ceremonies, they resolve that they will have no ceremonies at all ; if convinced that it is unworthy to grovel in the presence of a duke, they conclude that it will be a fine thing to refuse the duke ordinary civility ; if convinced that monarchs are not much wiser or better than other human beings, they run off into the belief that all kings have been little more than incarnate demons ; if convinced that representative government often works very imperfectly, they raise a cry for autocracy ; if convinced that monarchy has its abuses, they call out for republicanism ; if convinced that Britain has many things which are not so good as they ought to be, they keep constantly extolling the perfection of the United States.

Now, inasmuch as a rise of even one step in the scale of thought elevates the man who has taken it above the vast host of men who have never taken even that one step, the number of people who (at least in matters of any moment) arrive at the Secondary Vulgar Error is much less than the number of the people who stop at the Primary Vulgar Error. Very great multitudes of human beings think it a very fine thing, the very finest of all human things, to be very rich. A much smaller number, either from the exercise of their own reflective powers, or from the indoctrination of romantic novels and over-drawn religious books, run to the opposite extreme : undervalue wealth, deny that it adds anything to human comfort and enjoyment, declare that it is an unmixed evil, profess to despise it. I daresay that many readers of the *Idylls of the King* will so misunderstand that exquisite song of ' Fortune and her

Wheel,' as to see in it only the charming and sublime embodiment of a secondary vulgar error—the error, to wit, that wealth and outward circumstances are of no consequence at all. To me that song appears rather to take the further step, and to reach the conclusion in which is embodied the deliberate wisdom of humankind upon this matter: the conclusion which shakes from itself on either hand either vulgar error: the idolisation of wealth on the one side, the contempt of it on the other: and to convey the sobered judgment that while the advantages and refinements of fortune are so great that no thoughtful man can long despise it, the responsibilities and temptations of it are so great that no thoughtful man will much repine if he fail to reach it; and thus that we may genially acquiesce in that which it pleases God to send. Midway between two vulgar errors: steering a sure track between Scylla and Charybdis: the grovelling multitude to the left, the romantic few to the right; stand the worlds of inspired wisdom. The pendulum had probably oscillated many times between the two errors, before it settled at the central truth: 'Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.'

But although these errors of reaction are less common than the primary vulgar errors, they are better worth noticing: inasmuch as in many cases they are the errors of the well-intentioned. People fall into the primary vulgar errors without ever thinking of right or wrong: merely feeling an impulse to go there, or to think thus. But worthy folk, for the most part, fall into the secondary vulgar errors, while honestly endeavouring to escape what they have

discerned to be wrong. Not indeed that it is always in good faith that men run to the opposite extreme. Sometimes they do it in perversity, being well aware that they are doing wrong. You hint to some young friend, to whom you are nearly enough related to be justified in doing so, that the dinner to which he has invited you, with several others, is unnecessarily fine, is somewhat extravagant, is beyond what he can afford. The young friend asks you back in a week or two, and sets before you a feast of salt herrings and potatoes. Now the fellow did not run into this extreme with the honest intention of doing right. He knew perfectly well that this was not what you meant. He did not go through this piece of folly in the sincere desire to avoid the other error of extravagance. Or, you are a country clergyman. You are annoyed, Sunday by Sunday, by a village lad who, from enthusiasm or ostentation, sings so loud in church as to disturb the whole congregation. You hint to him, as kindly as you can, that there is something very pleasing about the softer tones of his voice, and that you would like to hear them more frequently. But the lad sees through your civil way of putting the case. His vanity is touched. He sees you mean that you don't like to hear him bellow: and next Sunday you will observe that he shuts up his hymn-book in dudgeon, and will not sing at all. Leave the blockhead to himself. Do not set yourself to stroke down his self-conceit: he knows quite well he is doing wrong: there is neither sense nor honesty in what he does. You remember the boy in *Pickwick*, who on his father finding fault with him for something wrong he had done, offered to kill himself if that would be any satisfaction to his parent. In this case you have a more recondite instance of this peculiar folly. Here the primary course is tacitly

assumed, without being stated. The primary impulse of the human being is to take care of himself : the opposite of *that* of course is to kill himself. And the boy, being chidden for doing something which might rank under the general head of taking care of himself, proposed (as that course appeared to be unsatisfactory) to take the opposite one. ' You don't take exercise enough,' said a tutor to a wrong-headed boy who was under his care : ' you ought to walk more.' Next morning the perverse fellow entered the breakfast parlour in a fagged condition, and said, with the air of a martyr, ' Well, I trust I have taken exercise enough to-day : I have walked twenty miles this morning.' As for all such manifestations of the disposition to run into opposite extremes, let them be treated as manifestations of pettedness, perversity, and dishonesty. In some cases a high-spirited youth may be excused them ; but, for the most part, they come with doggedness, wrong-headedness, and dense stupidity. And any pretext that they are exhibited with an honest intention to do right, ought to be regarded as a transparently false pretext.

I have now before me a list (prepared by a much stronger hand than mine) of honest cases in which men, avoiding Scylla, run into Charybdis : in which men, thinking to bend the crooked twig straight, bend it backwards. But before mentioning these, it may be remarked that there often is such a thing as a reaction from a natural tendency, even when that natural tendency is not towards what may be called a primary vulgar error. The law of reaction extends to all that human beings can ever feel the disposition to think or do. There are, doubtless, minds of great fixity of opinion and motive : and there are certain things, in the case of almost all men, as regards which their belief and their active

bias never vary through life: but with most human beings, with nations, with humankind, as regards very many and very important matters, as surely and as far as the pendulum has swung to the right, so surely and so far will it swing to the left. I do not say that an opinion in favour of monarchy is a primary vulgar error: or that an opinion in favour of republicanism is a secondary: both may be equally right: but assuredly each of these is a reaction from the other. America, for instance, is one great reaction from Europe. The principle on which these reactionary swings of the pendulum take place is plain. Whatever be your present position, you feel its evils and drawbacks keenly. Your feeling of the present evil is much more vivid than your imagination of the evil which is sure to be inherent in the opposite system, whatever that may be. You live in a country where the National Church is Presbyterian. You see, day by day, many inconveniences and disadvantages inherent in that form of church government. It is of the nature of evil to make its presence much more keenly felt than the presence of good. So while keenly alive to the drawbacks of presbytery, you are hardly conscious of its advantages. You swing over, let us suppose, to the other end: you swing over from Scotland into England, from presbytery to episcopacy. For a while you are quite delighted to find yourself free from the little evils of which you had been wont to complain. But by-and-by the drawbacks of episcopacy begin to push themselves upon your notice. You have escaped one set of disadvantages: you find that you have got into the middle of another. Scylla no longer bellows in your hearing; but Charybdis whirls you round. You begin to feel that the country and the system yet remain to be sought, in which some form

of evil, of inconvenience, of worry, shall not press you. Am I wrong in fancying, dear friends, more than one or two, that but for very shame the pendulum would swing back again to the point from which it started : and you, kindly Scots, would find yourselves more at home in kindly and homely Scotland, with her simple forms and faith ? So far as my experience has gone, I think that in all matters not of vital moment it is best that the pendulum should stay at the end of the swing where it first found itself : it will be in no more stable position at the other end : and it will somehow feel stranger-like there. And you, my friend, though in your visits to Anglican territory you heartily conform to the Anglican Church, and enjoy as much as mortal can her noble cathedrals and her stately worship ; still I know that, after all, you cannot shake off the spell in which the old remembrances of your boyhood have bound you. I know that your heart warms to the Burning Bush ;\* and that it will, till death chills it.

A noteworthy fact in regard to the swing of the pendulum, is that the secondary tendency is sometimes found in the ruder state of society, and the less reflective man. Naturalness comes last. The pendulum started from naturalness : it swung over into artificiality : and with thoughtful people it has swung back to naturalness again. Thus it is natural, when in danger, to be afraid. It is natural, when you are possessed of any strong feeling, to show it. You see all this in children : this is the point which the pendulum starts from. It swings over, and we find a reaction from this. The reaction is, to maintain and exhibit perfect coolness and indifference in danger ; to pretend to be incapable of fear. This state of things we find in the Red Indian, a rude and uncivilised being. But it is plain that with

\* The scutcheon of the Church of Scotland.

people who are able to think, there must be a reaction from this. The pendulum cannot long stay in a position which flies so completely in the face of the law of gravitation. It is pure nonsense to talk about being incapable of fear. I remember reading somewhere about Queen Elizabeth, that 'her soul was incapable of fear.' That statement is false and absurd. You may regard fear as unmanly and unworthy: you may repress the manifestations of it; but the state of mind which (in beings not properly monstrous or defective) follows the perception of being in danger, is fear. As surely as the perception of light is sight, so surely is the perception of danger fear. And for a man to say that his soul is incapable of fear, is just as absurd as to say that from a peculiarity of constitution, when dipped in water, he does not get wet. You, human being, whoever you may be, when you are placed in danger, and know you are placed in danger, and reflect on the fact, you feel afraid. Don't vapour and say no; we know how the mental machine *must* work, unless it be diseased. Now, the sensible man admits all this: he admits that a bullet through his brain would be a very serious thing for himself; and likewise for his wife and children: he admits that he shrinks from such a prospect; he will take pains to protect himself from the risk; but he says that if duty requires him to run the risk he will run it. *This* is the courage of the civilised man as opposed to the blind, bull-dog insensibility of the savage. *This* is courage—to know the existence of danger, but to face it, nevertheless. Here, under the influence of longer thought, the pendulum has swung into common sense, though not quite back to the point from which it started. Of course, it still keeps swinging about in individual minds. The other day

I read in a newspaper a speech by a youthful rifleman, in which he boasted that no matter to what danger exposed, *his* corps would never take shelter behind trees and rocks, but would stand boldly out to the aim of the enemy. I was very glad to find this speech answered in a letter to the *Times*, written by a rifleman of great experience and proved bravery. The experienced man pointed out that the inexperienced man was talking nonsense: that true courage appeared in manfully facing risks which were inevitable, but not in running into needless peril: and that the business of a soldier was to be as useful to his country and as destructive to the enemy as possible, and not to make needless exhibitions of personal foolhardiness. Thus swings the pendulum as to danger and fear. The point of departure, the primary impulse is,

1. An impulse to avoid danger at all hazards: *i.e.*, to run away, and save yourself, however discreditably.

The pendulum swings to the other extremity, and we have the secondary impulse—

2. An impulse to disregard danger, and even to run into it, as if it were of no consequence at all; *i.e.*, young rifleman foolhardiness, and Red Indian insensibility.

The pendulum comes so far back and rests at the point of wisdom:

3. A determination to avoid all danger, the running into which would do no good, and which may be avoided consistently with honour; but manfully to face danger, however great, that comes in the way of duty.

But after all this deviation from the track, I return to my list of Secondary Vulgar Errors, run into with good and honest intentions. Here is the first—

Don't you know, my reader, that it is natural to think very bitterly of the misconduct which affects yourself? If a man cheats your friend, or cheats your slight acquaintance, or cheats some one who is quite unknown to you, by selling him a lame horse, you disapprove his conduct, indeed, but not nearly so much as if he had cheated yourself. You learn that Miss Limejuice has been disseminating a grossly untrue account of some remarks which you made in her hearing: and your first impulse is to condemn her malicious falsehood much more severely than if she had merely told a few lies about some one else. Yet it is quite evident that if we were to estimate the doings of men with perfect justice, we should fix solely on the moral element in their doings; and the accidental circumstance of the offence or injury to ourselves would be neither here nor there. The primary vulgar error, then, in this case is, undue and excessive disapprobation of misconduct from which *we* have suffered. No one but a very stupid person would, if it were fairly put to him, maintain that this extreme disapprobation was right: but it cannot be denied that this is the direction to which *all* human beings are likely, at first, to feel an impulse to go. A man does you some injury: you are much angrier than if he had done the like injury to some one else. You are much angrier when your own servants are guilty of little neglects and follies, than when the servants of your next neighbour are guilty in a precisely similar degree. The Prime Minister (or Chancellor) fails to make you a Queen's Counsel or a Judge: you are much more angry than if he had overlooked some other man of precisely equal merit. And I do not mean merely that the injury done to yourself comes more home to you, but that positively you think it a worse thing. It seems as if there were more of moral

evil in it. The boy who steals your plums seems worse than other boys stealing other plums. The servant who sells your oats and starves your horses, seems worse than other servants who do the like. It is not merely that you feel where the shoe pinches yourself, more than where it pinches another: *that* is all quite right. It is that you have a tendency to think it is a worse shoe than another which gives an exactly equal amount of pain. You are prone to dwell upon and brood over the misconduct which affected yourself.

Well, you begin to see that this is unworthy, that selfishness and mortified conceit are at the foundation of it. You determine that you will shake yourself free from this vulgar error. What more magnanimous, you think, than to do the opposite of the wrong thing? Surely it will be generous, and even heroic, wholly to acquit the wrongdoer, and even to cherish him for a bosom friend. So the pendulum swings over to the opposite extreme, and you land in the secondary vulgar error. I do not mean to say that in practice many persons are likely thus to bend the twig backwards; but it is no small evil to think that it would be a right thing, and a fine thing, to do even that which you never intend to do. So you write an essay, or even a book, the gist of which is that it is a grand thing to select for a friend and guide the human being who has done you signal injustice and harm. You forget that wrong is wrong, though it be done against yourself, and that you have no right to acquit the wrong to yourself as though it were no wrong at all. *That* lies beyond your province. You may forgive the personal offence, but it does not rest with you to acquit the guilt. You have no right to confuse moral distinctions by practically saying that wrong is not wrong, because it is done against you. All wrong is against very many things and very grave

things, besides being against you. It is not for you to speak in the name of God and the universe. You may not wish to say much about the injury done to yourself, but *there it is*; and as to the choosing for your friend the man who has greatly injured you, in most cases such a choice would be a very unwise one, because in most cases it would amount to this—that you should select a man for a certain post mainly because he has shown himself possessed of qualities which unfit him for that post. That surely would be very foolish. If you had to appoint a postman, would you choose a man because he had no legs? And what is very foolish can never be very magnanimous.

The right course to follow lies between the two which have been set out. The man who has done wrong to you is still a *wrong-doer*. The question you have to consider is, What ought your conduct to be towards a wrong-doer? Let there be no harbour given to any feeling of personal revenge. But remember that it is your duty to disapprove what is wrong, and that it is wisdom not too far to trust a man who has proved himself unworthy to be trusted. I have no feeling of selfish bitterness against the person who deceived me deliberately and grossly, yet I cannot but judge that deliberate and gross deceit is bad; and I cannot but judge that the person who deceived me once might, if tempted, deceive me again: so he shall not have the opportunity. I look at the horse which a friend offers me for a short ride. I discern upon the knees of the animal a certain slight but unmistakable roughness of the hair. That horse has been down; and if I mount that horse at all (which I shall not do except in a case of necessity), I shall ride him with a tight rein, and with a sharp look-out for rolling stones.

Another matter in regard to which Scylla and Charybdis are very discernible, is the fashion in which human beings think and speak of the good or bad qualities of their friends.

The primary tendency here is to blindness to the faults of a friend, and over-estimate of his virtues and qualifications. Most people are disposed extravagantly to over-value anything belonging to or connected with themselves. A farmer tells you that there never were such turnips as his turnips; a schoolboy thinks that the world cannot show boys so clever as those with whom he is competing for the first place in his form, a clever student at college tells you what magnificent fellows are certain of his compeers—how sure they are to become great men in life. Talk of Tennyson! You have not read Smith's prize poem. Talk of Macaulay! Ah, if you could see Brown's prize essay! A mother tells you (fathers are generally less infatuated) how her boy was beyond comparison the most distinguished and clever in his year—how he stood quite apart from any of the others. Your eye happens to fall a day or two afterwards upon the list advertised in the newspapers, and you discover that (curiously) the most distinguished and clever boy in that particular school is seventh. I daresay you may have met with families in which there existed the most absurd and preposterous belief as to their superiority, social, intellectual, and moral, above other families which were as good or better. And it is to be admitted, that if you are happy enough to have a friend whose virtues and qualifications are really high, your primary tendency will probably be to fancy him a great deal cleverer, wiser, and better than he really is, and to imagine that he possesses no faults at all. The over-estimate of his good qualities will be the result of your seeing them constantly,

and having their excellence much pressed on your attention, while from not knowing so well other men who are quite as good, you are led to think that those good qualities are more rare and excellent than in fact they are. And you may possibly regard it as a duty to shut your eyes to the faults of those who are dear to you, and to persuade yourself, against your judgment, that they have no faults or none worth thinking of. One can imagine a child painfully struggling to be blind to a parent's errors, and thinking it undutiful and wicked to admit the existence of that which is too evident. And if you know well a really good and able man, you will very naturally think his goodness and his ability to be relatively much greater than they are. For goodness and ability are in truth very noble things: the more you look at them the more you will feel this: and it is natural to judge that what is so noble cannot be very common; whereas in fact there is much more good in this world than we are ready to believe. If you find an intelligent person who believes that some particular author is by far the best in the language, or that some particular composer's music is by far the finest, or that some particular preacher is by far the most eloquent and useful, or that some particular river has by far the finest scenery, or that some particular sea-side place has by far the most bracing and exhilarating air, or that some particular magazine is ten thousand miles ahead of all competitors, the simple explanation in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred is this—that the honest man who holds these overstrained opinions *knows* a great deal better than he knows any others, that author, that music, that preacher, that river, that sea-side place, that magazine. He knows how good they are: and not having much studied the merits of competing things, he does not know that these are very nearly as good.

But I do not think that there is any subject whatever in regard to which it is so capricious and arbitrary whether you shall run into Scylla or into Charybdis. It depends entirely on how it strikes the mind, whether you shall go off a thousand miles to the right or a thousand miles to the left. You know, if you fire a rifle bullet at an iron-coated ship, the bullet, if it impinge upon the iron plate at A, may glance away to the west, while if it impinge upon the iron plate at B, only an inch distant from A, it may glance off towards the directly opposite point of the compass. A very little thing makes all the difference. You stand in the engine-room of a steamer ; you admit the steam to the cylinders, and the paddles turn ahead ; a touch of a lever, you admit the self-same steam to the self-same cylinders, and the paddles turn astern. It is so oftentimes in the moral world. The turning of a straw decides whether the engines shall work forward or backward.

Now, given a friend, to whom you are very warmly attached : it is a toss-up whether your affection for your friend shall make you,

1. Quite blind to his faults ; or,
2. Acutely and painfully alive to his faults.

Sincere affection may impel either way. Your friend, for instance, makes a speech at a public dinner. He makes a tremendously bad speech. Now, your love for him may lead you either

1. To fancy that his speech is a remarkably good one ; or,
2. To feel acutely how bad his speech is, and to wish you could sink through the floor for very shame.

If you did not care for him at all, you would not mind a bit whether he made a fool of himself or not. But if you really care for him, and if the speech be really very bad, and if you are competent to judge

whether speeches in general be bad or not, I do not see how you can escape falling either into Scylla or Charybdis. And accordingly, while there are families in which there exists a preposterous over-estimate of the talents and acquirements of their several members, there are other families in which the rifle bullet has glanced off in the opposite direction, and in which there exists a depressing and unreasonable under-estimate of the talents and acquirements of their several members. I have known such a thing as a family in which certain boys during their early education had it ceaselessly drilled into them that they were the idlest, stupidest, and most ignorant boys in the world. Poor little fellows, they grew up under that gloomy belief : for conscience is a very artificial thing, and you may bring up very good boys in the belief that they are very bad. At length, happily, they went to a great public school ; and like rockets they went up forthwith and never descended. From school they went to the university, and there won honours more eminent than their contemporaries. It will not surprise people who know much of human nature, to be told that through this brilliant career of school and college work the home belief in their idleness and ignorance continued unchanged, and that hardly at its end was the toil-worn senior wrangler regarded as other than an idle and useless blockhead. Now, the affection which prompts the under-estimate may be quite as real and deep as that which prompts the over-estimate, but its manifestation is certainly the less amiable and pleasing. I have known a successful author whose relatives never believed, till the reviews assured them of it, that his writings were anything but contemptible and discreditable trash.

I have been speaking of an honest though erroneous estimate of the qualities of one's friends, rather

than of any expression of that estimate. The primary tendency is to an over-estimate ; the secondary tendency is to an under-estimate. A commonplace man thinks there never was mortal so wise and good as the friend he values ; a man who is a thousandth part of a degree less commonplace resolves that he will keep clear of that error, and accordingly he feels bound to exaggerate the failings of his friend and to extenuate his good qualities. He thinks that a friend's judgment is very good and sound, and that he may well rely upon it ; but for fear of showing it too much regard, he probably shows it too little. He thinks that in some dispute his friend is right ; but for fear of being partial he decides that his friend is wrong. It is obvious that in any instance in which a man, seeking to avoid the primary error of over-estimating his friend, falls into the secondary of under-estimating him, he will (if any importance be attached to his judgment) damage his friend's character ; for most people will conclude that he is saying of his friend the best that can be said ; and that if even *he* admits that there is so little to approve about his friend, there must be very little indeed to approve : whereas the truth may be, that he is saying the worst that can be said—that no man could with justice give a worse picture of the friend's character.

Not very far removed from this pair of vulgar errors stand the following :

The primary vulgar error is, to set up as an infallible oracle one whom we regard as wise—to regard any question as settled finally if we know what is his opinion upon it. You remember the man in the *Spectator* who was always quoting the sayings of Mr. Nisby. There was a report in London that the Grand Vizier was dead. The good man was uncertain whether to believe

the report or not. He went and talked with Mr. Nisby, and returned with his mind reassured. Now, he enters in his diary that 'the Grand Vizier was certainly dead.' Considering the weakness of the reasoning powers of many people, there is something pleasing after all in this tendency to look round for somebody stronger upon whom they may lean. It is wise and natural in a scarlet runner to climb up something, for it could not grow up by itself ; and for practical purposes it is well that in each household there should be a little Pope, whose *dicta* on all topics shall be unquestionable. It saves what is to many people the painful effort of making up their mind what they are to do or to think. It enables them to think or act with much greater decision and confidence. Most men have always a lurking distrust of their own judgment, unless they find it confirmed by that of somebody else. There are very many decent commonplace people who, if they had been reading a book or article and had been thinking it very fine, would, if you were resolutely and loudly to declare in their hearing that it was wretched trash, begin to think that it was wretched trash too.

The primary vulgar error, then, is to regard as an oracle one whom we esteem as wise ; and the secondary, the Charybdis opposite to this Scylla, is, to entertain an excessive dread of being too much led by one whom we esteem as wise. I mean an honest candid dread. I do not mean a petted, wrong-headed, pragmatical determination to let him see that you can think for yourself. You remember how Presumption, in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, on being offered some good advice, cut his kind adviser short by declaring that *Every tub must stand on its own bottom*. We have all known men, young and old, who, upon being advised to do something which they knew they

ought to do, would out of pure perversity and a wrong-headed independence, go and do just the opposite thing. The secondary error of which I am now thinking is that of the man who honestly dreads making too much of the judgment of any mortal ; and who, acting from a good intention, probably goes wrong in the same direction as the wrongheaded conceited man. Now, don't you know that to such an extent does this morbid fear of trusting too much to any mortal go in some men, that in their practical belief you would think that the fact of any man being very wise was a reason why his judgment should be set aside as unworthy of consideration ; and more particularly, that the fact of any man being supposed to be a powerful reasoner, was quite enough to show that all he says is to go for nothing ? You are quite aware how jauntily some people use this last consideration, to sweep away at once all the reasons given by an able and ingenious speaker or writer. And it cuts the ground effectually from under his feet. You state an opinion, somewhat opposed to that commonly received. An honest, stupid person meets it with a surprised stare. You tell him (I am recording what I have myself witnessed) that you have been reading a work on the subject by a certain prelate : you state as well as you can the arguments which are set forth by the distinguished prelate. These arguments seem of great weight. They deserve at least to be carefully considered. They seem to prove the novel opinion to be just : they assuredly call on candid minds to ponder the whole matter well before relapsing into the old current way of thinking. Do you expect that the honest, stupid person will judge thus ? If so, you are mistaken. He is not shaken in the least by all these strong reasons. The man who has set these reasons forth is known to be a master of logic ; *that* is good

ground why all his reasons should count for nothing. *Oh*, says the stupid, honest person, *we all know that the Archbishop can prove anything!* And so the whole thing is finally settled.

I have a considerable list of instances in which the reaction from an error on one side of the line of right, lands in error equally distant from the line of right on the other side: but it is needless to go on to illustrate these at length; the mere mention of them will suffice to suggest many thoughts to the intelligent reader. A primary vulgar error, to which very powerful minds have frequently shown a strong tendency, is bigoted intolerance: intolerance in politics, in religion, in ecclesiastical affairs, in morals, in anything. You may safely say that nothing but most unreasonable bigotry would lead a Tory to say that all Whigs are scoundrels, or a Whig to say that all Tories are bloated tyrants or crawling sycophants. There is something fine, however, about a heartily intolerant man: you like him, though you disapprove of him. Even if I were inclined to Whiggery, I should admire the downright dictum of Dr. Johnson, that *the devil was the first Whig*. Even if I were a Nonconformist, I should like Sydney Smith the better for the singular proof of his declining strength which he once adduced: 'I do believe,' he said, 'that if you were to put a knife into my hand, I should not have vigour enough to stick it into a Dissenter!' The secondary error in this respect is a latitudinarian liberality which regards truth and falsehood as matters of indifference. Genuine liberality of sentiment is a good thing, and difficult as it is good: but much liberality, political and religious, arises really from the fact, that the liberal man does not care a rush about the matter in debate. It is very easy to be tolerant in a case in which you have no feeling whatever either way.

The Churchman who does not mind a bit whether the Church stands or falls, has no difficulty in tolerating the enemies and assailants of the Church. It is different with a man who holds the existence of a national Establishment as a vital matter. And I have generally remarked that when clergymen of the Church profess extreme catholicity of spirit, and declare that they do not regard it as a thing of the least consequence whether a man be Churchman or Dissenter, intelligent Nonconformists receive such protestations with much contempt, and (possibly with injustice) suspect their utterer of hypocrisy. If you really care much about any principle; and if you regard it as of essential importance; you cannot help feeling a strong impulse to intolerance of those who decidedly and actively differ from you.

Here are some further vulgar errors, primary and secondary :

Primary—Idleness, and excessive self-indulgence ;  
Secondary—Penances, and self-inflicted tortures.

Primary—*Swallowing whole* all that is said or done by one's party ;

Secondary—Dread of quite agreeing, or quite disagreeing on any point with any one ; and trying to keep at exactly an equal distance from each.

Primary—Following the fashion with indiscriminate ardour ;

Secondary—Finding a merit in singularity, as such.

Primary—Being quite captivated with thought which is striking and showy, but not sound ;

Secondary—Concluding that whatever is sparkling must be unsound.

I hardly know which tendency of the following is the primary, and which the secondary; but I am sure that both exist. It may depend upon the district of country, and the age of the thinker, which of the two is the action and which the reaction:

1. Thinking a clergyman a model of perfection, because he is a stout dashing fellow who plays at cricket and goes out fox-hunting; and, generally, flies in the face of all conventionalism;

2. Thinking a clergyman a model of perfection, because he is of very grave and decorous deportment; never plays at cricket, and never goes out fox-hunting; and, generally, conforms carefully to all the little proprieties.

1. Thinking a bishop a model prelate, because he has no stiffness or ceremony about him, but talks frankly to everybody, and puts all who approach him at their ease;

2. Thinking a bishop a model prelate, because he never descends from his dignity; never forgets that he *is* a bishop, and keeps all who approach him in their proper places.

1. Thinking the Anglican Church service the best, because it is so decorous, solemn, and dignified;

2. Thinking the Scottish Church service the best, because it is so simple and so capable of adaptation to all circumstances which may arise.

1. Thinking an artisan a sensible, right-minded man, knowing his station, because he is always very respectful in his demeanour to the squire, and great folks generally;

2. Thinking an artisan a fine, manly, independent fellow, because he is always much less respectful in

his demeanour to the squire than he is to other people.

1. Thinking it a fine thing to be a fast, reckless, swaggering, drinking, swearing reprobate: Being ashamed of the imputation of being a well-behaved and (above all) a pious and conscientious young man: Thinking it manly to do wrong, and washy to do right;

2. Thinking it a despicable thing to be a fast, reckless, swaggering, drinking, swearing reprobate: Thinking that it is manly to do right, and shameful to do wrong.

1. That a young man should begin his letters to his father with HONOURED SIR; and treat the old gentleman with extraordinary deference upon all occasions;

2. That a young man should begin his remarks to his father on any subject with, I SAY, GOVERNOR; and treat the old gentleman upon all occasions with no deference at all.

But indeed, intelligent reader, the swing of the pendulum is the type of the greater amount of human opinion and human feeling. In individuals, in communities, in parishes, in little country towns, in great nations, from hour to hour, from week to week, from century to century, the pendulum swings to and fro. From Yes on the one side to No on the other side of almost all conceivable questions, the pendulum swings. Sometimes it swings over from Yes to No in a few hours or days; sometimes it takes centuries to pass from the one extremity to the other. In feeling, in taste, in judgment, in the grandest matters and the least, the pendulum swings.

From Popery to Puritanism ; from Puritanism back towards Popery ; from Imperialism to Republicanism, and back towards Imperialism again ; from Gothic architecture to Palladian, and from Palladian back to Gothic ; from hooped petticoats to drapery of the scantiest, and from that backwards to the multitudinous crinoline ; from crying up the science of arms to crying it down, and back ; from the schoolboy telling you that his companion Brown is the jolliest fellow, to the schoolboy telling you that his companion Brown is a beast, and back again ; from very high carriages to very low ones, and back ; from very short horsetails to very long ones, and back again—the pendulum swings. In matters of serious judgment it is comparatively easy to discern the rationale of this oscillation from side to side. It is that the evils of what is present are strongly felt, while the evils of what is absent are forgotten ; and so, when the pendulum has swung over to A, the evils of A send it flying over to B, while when it reaches B the evils of B repel it again to A. In matters of feeling it is less easy to discover the how and why of the process : we can do no more than take refuge in the general belief that nature loves the swing of the pendulum. There are people who at one time have an excessive affection for some friend, and at another take a violent disgust at him ; and who (though sometimes permanently remaining at the latter point) oscillate between these positive and negative poles. You, being a sensible man, would not feel very happy if some men were loudly crying you up : for you would be very sure that in a little while they would be loudly crying you down. If you should ever happen to feel for one day an extraordinary lightness and exhilaration of spirits, you will know that you must pay for all this the price of corresponding de-

pression—the hot fit must be counterbalanced by the cold. Let us thank God that there are beliefs and sentiments as to which the pendulum does not swing, though even in these I have known it do so. I have known the young girl who appeared thoroughly good and pious, who devoted herself to works of charity, and (with even an over-scrupulous spirit) eschewed vain company: and who by-and-by learned to laugh at all serious things, and ran into the utmost extremes of giddiness and extravagant gaiety. And not merely should all of us be thankful if we feel that in regard to the gravest sentiments and beliefs our mind and heart remain year after year at the same fixed point: I think we should be thankful if we find that as regards our favourite books and authors our taste remains unchanged; that the calm judgment of our middle age approves the preferences of ten years since, and that these gather strength as time gives them the witchery of old remembrances and associations. You enthusiastically admired Byron once, you estimate him differently now. You once thought *Festus* finer than *Paradise Lost*, but you have swung away from *that*. But for a good many years you have held by Wordsworth, Shakespeare, and Tennyson, and this taste you are not likely to outgrow. It is very curious to look over a volume which we once thought magnificent, entralling, incomparable; and to wonder how on earth we ever cared for that stilted rubbish. No doubt the pendulum swings quite as decidedly to your estimate of yourself as to your estimate of any one else. It would be nothing at all to have other people attacking and depreciating your writings, sermons, if you yourself had entire confidence in them. The mortifying thing is when your own taste and judgment say worse of your former productions than could be said by the most unfriendly critic;

and the dreadful thought occurs, that if you yourself to-day think so badly of what you wrote ten years since, it is probable enough that on this day ten years hence (if you live to see it) you may think as badly of what you are writing to-day. Let us hope not. Let us trust that at length a standard of taste and judgment is reached from which we shall not ever materially swing away. Yet the pendulum will never be quite arrested as to your estimate of yourself. Now and then you will think yourself a blockhead: by-and-by you will think yourself very clever; and your judgment will oscillate between these opposite poles of belief. Sometimes you will think that your house is remarkably comfortable, sometimes that it is unendurably uncomfortable; sometimes you will think that your place in life is a very dignified and important one, sometimes that it is a very poor and insignificant one; sometimes you will think that some misfortune or disappointment which has befallen you is a very crushing one, sometimes you will think that it is better as it is; so poor, weak, wayward a thing is the human heart!

You know, of course, how the pendulum of public opinion swings backwards and forwards. The truth lies somewhere about the middle of the arc it describes, in most cases. You know how the popularity of political men oscillates, from A, the point of greatest popularity, to B, the point of no popularity at all. Think of Lord Brougham. Once the pendulum swung far to the right: he was the most popular man in Britain. Then, for many years, the pendulum swung far to the left, into the cold regions of unpopularity, loss of influence, and opposition benches. And now, in his last days, the pendulum has come over to the right again. So with lesser

men. When the new clergyman comes to a country parish, how high his estimation ! Never was there preacher so impressive, pastor so diligent, man so frank and agreeable. By-and-by his sermons are middling, his diligence middling ; his manners rather stiff or rather too easy. In a year or two the pendulum rests at its proper point : and from that time onward the parson gets, in most cases, very nearly the credit he deserves. The like oscillation of public opinion and feeling exists in the case of unfavourable as of favourable judgments. A man commits a great crime. His guilt is thought awful. There is a general outcry for his condign punishment. He is sentenced to be hanged. In a few days the tide begins to turn. His crime was not so great. He had met great provocation. His education had been neglected. He deserves pity rather than reprobation. Petitions are got up that he should be let off ; and largely signed by the self-same folk who were loudest in the outcry against him. And instead of this fact, that those folk were the keenest against the criminal, being received (as it ought) as proof that their opinion is worth nothing at all, many will receive it as proof that their opinion is entitled to special consideration. The principle of the pendulum in the matter of criminals is well understood by the Old Bailey practitioners of New York and their worthy clients. When a New Yorker is sentenced to be hanged, he remains as cool as a cucumber ; for the New York law is, that a year must pass between the sentence and the execution. And long before the year passes, the public sympathy has turned in the criminal's favour. Endless petitions go up for his pardon. Of course he gets off. And indeed it is not improbable that he may receive a public testimonial. It cannot be denied that the natural transition in

the popular feeling is from applauding a man to hanging him, and from hanging a man to applauding him.

Even so does the pendulum swing, and the world run away!

(1861.)

## XI.

### AT THE CASTLE : WITH SOME THOUGHTS ON MICHAEL SCOTT'S FAMILIAR SPIRIT.

NOT on a study table in a back parlour in a great city shall these little blue pages be covered with written characters. Every word shall be written in the open air. The page shall be lighted by sunshine that comes through no glass ; but which is tempered by coming through masses of green leaves. And this essay is not to be composed : not to be screwed out, to use the figure of Mr. Thackeray : not to be pumped out, to use the figure of *Festus*. It shall grow without an effort. When any thought occurs, the pencil shall note it down. No thought shall be hurried in its coming.

You know how after a good many months of constant work, with the neck always at the collar, you grow wearied, and easily worried. Little things become burdensome : and the best of work is felt as a task. You cannot reason yourself out of that : ten days' rest is the thing that will do it. Be thankful if then you can have such a season of quiet in as green and shady a nook of country as mortal eyes could wish to see : in a nook like this, amid green grass and green trees, and the wild flowers of the early summer. For this is little more than midway in the pleasant month of May.

It is a very warm, sunshiny morning. This is a little open glade of rich grass, lighted up with daisies and buttercups. The little glade is surrounded by large forest trees: under the trees there is a blaze of primroses and wild hyacinths. A soft west wind, laden with the fragrance of lilac and apple blossoms, wakes the gentlest of sounds (in a more expressive language than ours it would have been called *susurrus*) in the topmost branches, gently swaying to and fro. The swaying branches cast a flecked and dancing shadow on the grass below. Midway the little glade is beyond the shadow; and there the grass, in the sunbeams, has a tinge of gold. A river runs by, with a ceaseless murmur over the warm stones. Look to the right hand; and there, over the trees, two hundred yards off, you may see a gray and red tower motionless above the waving branches: and lower down, hardly surmounting the wood, a stretch of massive wall, with huge buttresses. Tower and wall crown a lofty knoll, which the river encircles, making it a peninsula. Wall-flower grows in the crannies: a little wild apple-tree, covered with white blossoms, crowns a detached fragment of a ruined gateway: sweetbriar grows at the base of the ancient walls: ivy and honeysuckle climb up them: and where great fragments of fallen wall testify to the excellence of the mortar of the eleventh century, wild roses have rooted themselves in masses, which are now only green. That is THE CASTLE: all that can be seen of it from this point. There is more to be said of it hereafter. Hard by this spot, two little children are sitting on the grass, to whom some one is reading a story.

The wise man will never weary of looking at green grass and green trees. It is an unspeakable refreshment to the eye and the mind: and the daily pressure of occupation cannot touch one here. One wonders

that human beings who always live amid such scenery do not look more like it. But some people are utterly unimpressionable by the influences of outward scenery. You may know men who have lived for many years where Nature has done her best with wood and rock and river : and even when you become well acquainted with them, you cannot discover the faintest trace in their talk or in their feeling of the mightily powerful touch (as it would be to many) which has been unceasingly laid upon them through all that time. Or you may have beheld a vacuous person at a picnic party, who amid traces of God's handiwork that should make men hold their breath, does but pass from the occupation of fatuously flirting with a young woman like himself, to furiously abusing the servants for not sufficiently cooling the wine. A great many of the highly respectable people we all know are entirely in the case of the hero of that exquisite poem of Wordsworth's, which Jeffrey never could bring himself to like.

But Nature ne'er could find her way  
    Into the heart of Peter Bell.  
In vain, through every changing year,  
    Did Nature lead him as before :  
A primrose by a river's brim  
    A yellow primrose was to him,  
        And it was nothing more.

A human being ought to be very thankful if his disposition be such that he heartily enjoys green grass and green trees. For there are clever men who do not : in a little while I shall tell you of an extraordinary and anomalous taste expressed on that subject by one of the cleverest men I know. If a man has a thousand a year, and his next neighbour five hundred : and if the man with five hundred makes his income go just as far as the larger one (and an approximation to doing so may be made by good management), it is

plain that these two mortals are, in respect of income, on the same precise footing. The poorer man gets so much more enjoyment out of his yearly revenue, as makes up for the fact that the richer man's revenue is twice as great.

There is a like compensation provided for the lack of material advantages in the case of many men, through their intense appreciation of the beauty of natural scenery, and of very simple things. A rich man may possess the acres, with their yearly rental : a poor man, such as a poet, a professor, a schoolmaster, a clergyman or the like, may possess the landscape which these acres make up, to the utter exclusion of the proprietor. Perhaps, friendly reader, God has not given you the earthly possessions which it has pleased Him to give to some whom you know: but He may have given you abundant recompense, by giving you the power of getting more enjoyment out of little things than many other man. You live in a little cottage, and your neighbour in a grand castle: you have a small collection of books, and your neighbour a great one of fine editions in sumptuous bindings and in carved oak cases : yet you may have so great delight in your snug house, and your familiar volumes, that in regard of actual enjoyment you may be the more enviable man. A green field with a large oak in the middle : a hedge of blossoming hawthorn : a thatched cottage under a great maple : twenty square yards of velvety turf : how really happy such things can make some simple folk !

Of course it occurs to one that the same people who get more enjoyment out of little pleasures will get more suffering out of anything painful. Because your tongue is more sensitive than the palm of your hand, it is aware of the flavour of a pine-apple which your palm would ignore : but it is also liable to know the

taste of assafoetida, of which your palm would be unconscious. The supersensitive nervous system is finely strung to discern pain as well as pleasure. No one knows, but the over-particular person, what a pure misery it is to go into an untidy room, if it be your own. There are people who suffer as much in having a tooth filed as others in losing a limb. A Frenchman, some years since, committed suicide: leaving a written paper to say he had done so because life was rendered unendurable through his being so much bitten by fleas. This is not a thing to smile at. That poor man, before his reason was upset, had probably endured torments of which those around had not the faintest idea. I have heard a good man praised for the patience with which he bore daily for weeks the surgeon's dressing of a very severe wound. The good man was thought heroic. I knew him well enough to be sure that the fact was that his nature was dull and slow. He did not suffer as average men would have suffered under that infliction. There are human beings in touching whose moral nature you feel you are touching the impenetrable skin of the hippopotamus. There are human beings in touching whose moral nature you feel you are touching the bare tip of a nerve. Eager, anxious men are prone to envy imperturbable and slow-moving men. A friend of mine, who is of an eager nature, tells me he looks with a feeling a few degrees short of veneration on a massive-minded and immovable being, who in telling a story makes such long pauses at the end of each sentence that you fancy the story done. Then poor Smith breaks in hastily with something he wants to say: but the massive-minded man, not noticing him, continues his parable till he pauses again at the end of another sentence. And Smith is made to feel as though he were very young.

I have said that likings vary in regard to such matters as the enjoyment of this scene. Oh this green grass, rich, unutterably green, with the butter-cups and daisies, with the yellow broom and the wild bees, and the environment of bright leafy trees that inclose you round : to think that there are people who do not care for you ! It was but yesterday, in a street of a famous and beautiful city, I met my friend Mr. Keene. Keene is a warm-hearted, magnanimous, unselfish, brave, out-spoken human being : as fine a fellow as is numbered among the clergy of either side of the Tweed. Besides these things, he is an admirable debater : fluent, ready, eloquent, hearty, fully persuaded that he is right and that his opponents are invariably wrong : and not without some measure of smartness and sharpness in expression. Keene approached me with a radiant face ; the result partly of inherent good nature, and partly of a very hot summer day. He had come to the city to take part in the debates of the great ecclesiastical council of a northern country. I was coming to this place. He was entering the city, in fact, for many days of deliberation and debate : I was departing from it, for certain days of rest and recreation. I could not refrain from displaying some measure of exultation at the contrast between our respective circumstances. I shall be lying to-morrow (I said) on green grass under green trees : while you will be existing (the word used indeed was stewing) in that crowded building, with its feverish atmosphere highly charged with carbonic acid gas. To these words Keene replied, with simple earnestness : I shall be quite happy there : I don't care a straw for green grass and green leaves ! Such was the sentiment of that eminent man. I pity him sincerely !

Here I paused : and thought for a little of the

great ecclesiastical council, and of lesser ecclesiastical councils. And the following reflection suggested itself.

Our good principles are too often like Don Quixote's helmet. We arrive at them in leisure, in cool blood, with an unexcited brain, which is commonly called a clear head. Then in actual life, they too commonly fail at the first real trial. Don Quixote made up his helmet carefully with a vizor of pasteboard. Then to ascertain whether it was strong enough, he dealt it a blow with his sword. Thereupon it went to pieces.

In like manner, in our better and more thoughtful hours, we resolve to be patient, forgiving, charitable, kind-spoken, unsuspicious,—in short, Christian, for *that* includes all. And the first time we are irritated we fail. We grow very angry at some small offence: we speak harshly, we act unfairly. I have heard a really good man preach. Afterwards I heard him speak in a lesser ecclesiastical council. He preached (so far as the sentiments expressed went) like an angel. He argued like just the reverse.

Ah, we make up our helmets with pasteboard. We resolve that henceforth we shall act on the most noble principles. And the helmets look very well so long as they are not put to the test. We fancy ourselves charitable, forgiving, Christian people, so long as we are not tried. A stroke with a sword, and the helmet goes to tatters. An attack on us: a reflection on us: a hint that we ever did wrong: and ah! the wretched outburst of wrath, bitterness, unfairness, malignity!

Of course, the best of men, as it has been said, are but men at the best. Let us be humble. Let there be no vain self-confidence. And especially, let us, entering on every scene that can possibly try us (and

when do we escape from such a scene ?) earnestly ask the guidance of that Blessed Spirit of whom is every good feeling and purpose in us ; and without whom our best resolutions will snap like reeds just when they are needed most to stand firm.

There is more to be said about the Castle. It is not a castle to which you go, that you may enjoy the society of great people, who notoriously form the daily associates of the working clergy. By the payment of a moderate weekly stipend, this castle may become yours. The castle is in ruins : but a little corner amid the great masses of crumbling stones which were placed here by strong hands dead for eight hundred years has been patched up so as to make an unpretending little dwelling : and there you may find the wainscoted rooms, the quaint pannelled ceilings of mingled timber and plaster, the winding turret stairs, the many secret doors, of past centuries. The castle stands on a lofty promontory of no great extent, which a little river encircles on two sides, and which a deep ravine cuts off from the surrounding country on the other two sides. You approach the castle over an arch of seventy feet in height : which spans the ravine. In former days it was a drawbridge. The bridge runs out of the inner court of the castle : midway in its length it turns off at almost a right angle, till it joins the bank on the other side of the ravine. That little bridge makes a charming place to walk on : and it is a great deal longer than any quarter-deck. It is all grown over with masses of ancient ivy : the fragrance of a sweetbriar hedge in the castle court pervades it at present : you look down from it upon a deep glen, through which the little river flows. The tops of the tall trees are far beneath you : there are various plane-trees with their thick leaves. Wherever

you look, it is one mass of rich foliage. Trees fill up the ravine: trees clothe the steep bank on the other side of the river: trees have rooted themselves in wonderful spots in the old walls: trees clothe the ascent that leads from the castle to that little summit near, crowned with one of the loveliest creations of the Gothic architect's skill. *That* is the chancel of a large church, of which only the chancel was ever built: and if you would behold a little chapel of inexpressible perfection and beauty; if you would discern the traces of the faithful and loving toil of men who have been for hundreds of years in their graves; if you would look upon ancient stones that seem as if they had grown and blossomed like a tree: then find out where that chapel is, and go and see it.

But you pass over the bridge; and under a ruined gateway, where part of a broken arch hangs over the passer-by, you enter the court. On the right hand ruined walls of vast thickness: the like on the left hand: but midway, there is the little portion that is habitable. Enter: pass into a pretty large wainscoted parlour: look out of the windows on the further side. You are a hundred feet above the garden below. For on that side, there is below you story after story of low-browed chambers, arched in massive stone; and lower still, the castle wall rises from the top of a precipice of perpendicular rock. On the further side from the river, the chambers are hewn out of the living stone. What a view from the window of that parlour first mentioned! Beneath, the garden, bright now with blossoming apple-trees: bounded by the river: and beyond the river a bank of wood, three hundred feet in height. A little window in a corner looks down the course of the stream: there is a deep dell of wood, one thick luxuriance of foliage; with here and there the gleam of the flowing water.

This is our place of rest. Add to all that has been said an inexpressible sense of a pervading quiet.

Do you find, when you come to a place where you are to have a brief holiday, a tendency to look back on the work you have been doing ; and to estimate what it has come to after all ? And have you found, even after many months of grinding as hard as you could, that it was mortifying to see how little was the permanent result ? Such seems to be the effect of looking back on work. One thinks of a case, parallel to the present feeling. There was Jacob, looking back on a long life : on a hundred and twenty years : and saying, sincerely, that his days had been few and evil. Now, in a blink of rest, my friend, look back on the results you have accomplished in those months of hard work. You thought them many and good at the time : now, they seem to be no better than few and evil. It is humiliating to think how little permanent result is got by a working day. To bring things to book, actually to count and weigh them, always makes them look less. You may remember a calculation made by the elder Disraeli, as to the amount of matter a man could read in a lifetime. It is very much less than you would have thought : perhaps one-tenth of what an ordinary person would guess. Thackeray, in his days of matured and practised power, thought it a good day's work to write six of the little pages of *Esmond*. A distinguished and experienced author told me that he esteemed three pages of the *Quarterly Review* a good day's work. Some men judge a sermon, which can be given in little more than half an hour, a sufficient result of the almost constant thought of a week. Six little pages, as the sole abiding result of a day on which the sun rose and set, and the clock went the round of the four-and-twenty hours : on

which you took your bath, and your breakfast, and read your newspaper, and, in short, went through the round of employments which make your habitude of being : six pages : skimmed by the reader in five minutes ! The truth is, that a great part of our energy goes just to bear the burden of the day, to do the work of the time : and we have only the little surplus of abiding possession. The way to keep ourselves from getting mortified and disheartened, when we look back on the remaining result of all our work, is to remember that we are not here merely to work : merely to produce that which shall be an abiding memorial of us. It is well if all we do and bear is forming our nature and character into something which we can willingly take with us when we go away from this life.

This morning, after breakfast, I was sitting on the parapet of the bridge already mentioned, looking down upon the tops of two plane-trees, and feeling a great deal the better for the sight. I believe it does good to an ordinary mortal to look down on the top of a large tree, and see the branches gently waving about. Little outward phenomena have a wonderful effect in soothing and refreshing the mind. Some men say the sight and sound of the sea calms and cheers them. You know how, when a certain old prophet was beaten and despairing, the All-wise thought it would be good for him to behold certain sublime manifestations of the power of the Almighty. We cannot explain the rationale of the process : but these things do us good. A wise and good and most laborious man told me that when he feels overworked and desponding, he flies away to Chamouni and looks at Mont Blanc : and in a few days he is set right. It was not a fanciful man who said that there is scenery in this world that would soothe even remorse. And for an ordinary person,

not a genius nor a ruffian, give us a lofty bridge whence you may look down upon a great plane-tree.

All this, however, is a deviation. Sitting on the bridge and enjoying the scene, this thought arose. Greatly as one joys and delights in this, what would the feeling be if one were authoritatively commanded to remain in this beautiful place, doing nothing, for a month? And one could not but confess that the feeling would not be pleasant. The things you enjoy most intensely, you enjoy for but a short time: then you are satiated. When parched with thirst, what so delightful as the first draught of fair water? But if you were compelled to drink a fourth and fifth tumbler, the water would become positively nauseous. So is it with rest. You enjoy it keenly for a little while: but constrained idleness, being prolonged, would make you miserable. Ten days here are delightful: then back, with fresh appetite and vigour, to the dear work. But a month here, thus early in the year, would be a fearful infliction. You have not earned the Autumn holidays as yet.

It is in human nature, that when you feel the pressure of anything painfully, you fancy that the opposite thing would set you right. When you are extremely busy, and distracted by a host of things demanding thought, you think that pure idleness would be pleasant. So, in boyhood, on a burning summer day, you thought it would be delicious to feel cold. You went to bathe in the sea: and you found it a great deal too cold.

Charles Lamb, for a great part of his life, was kept very busy, at uncongenial work. Oftentimes, through those irksome hours, he thought how pleasant it would be to be set free from that work for ever. So he said that if he had a son, the son should be called **NOTHING TO DO**; and he should do nothing. Of course, Elia

spoke only half-seriously. We know what he meant. But, in sober earnest, we can all see that **NOTHING TO DO** would have been a miserable as well as a wicked man. He would assuredly have grown a bad fellow. And he would just as surely have been a wretched being.

Every one knows the story of Michael Scott and his Familiar Spirit. Of late, I have begun to understand the meaning of that story.

Michael Scott, it is recorded, had a Familiar Spirit under his charge. We do not know how Michael Scott first got possession of that Spirit. Probably he raised it and then could not get rid of it: like the man who begged Dr. Log to propose a toast, and then Dr. Log spoke for three-quarters of an hour. Michael Scott had to provide employment for that being, on pain of being torn in pieces. Michael gave the Spirit very difficult things to do. They were done with terrible ease and rapidity. The three peaks of the Eildon Hills were formed in a single night. A weir was built across the Tweed in a like time. Michael Scott was in a terrible state. In these days, he would probably have desired the Spirit to make and lay the Atlantic Telegraph Cable. But a happy thought struck him. He bade his Familiar to make a rope of sea-sand. Of course, this provided unlimited occupation. The thing could never be finished. And the wizard was all right.

These things are an allegory. Michael Scott's Familiar Spirit is your own mind, my friend. Your own mind demands that you find it occupation: and if you do not, it will make you miserable. It is an awful thing to have nothing to do. The mill within you demands grist to grind: and if you give it none, it still grinds on, as Luther said: but it is itself it

grinds and wears away. My friend Smith, having overworked his eyes at College, was once forbid to read or write for eighteen months. It was a horrible penance at first. But he devised ways of giving the machine work ; and during that period of enforced idleness, he acquired the power of connected thinking without writing down each successive thought. Few people have that power. One of the rarest of all acquirements is the faculty of profitable meditation. Most human beings, when they fancy they are meditating, are, in fact, doing nothing at all ; and thinking of nothing.

You will remember what was once said by a lively French writer : that we commonly think of idleness as one of the beatitudes of Heaven ; while we ought rather to think of it as one of the miseries of Hell. It was an extreme way which that writer took of testifying to the tormenting power of Michael Scott's Familiar Spirit.

And one evil in this matter is, that it is just the men who lead the most active and useful lives, who are making Michael Scott's Spirit most insatiable. You give it abundance to do : and so when work is cut off from it, it becomes rampageous. You lose the power of sitting still and doing nothing. You find it inexpressibly irksome to travel by railway for even half an hour with nothing to read. For the most handy way of pacifying the Spirit is to give it something to read. People tell you how disgusting it was when they had to wait for three-quarters of an hour for the train at some little country railway station. Michael Scott's Spirit was worrying and tormenting them, being kept without employment for that time. You know to what shifts people will have recourse, rather than have the Familiar Spirit coming and tormenting them. To give grist to the mill, to pro-

vide the Familiar Spirit with something to do, on a railway journey of twelve hours, they will read all the advertisements in their newspaper: they will go back a second and a third time over all the news: they will even diligently peruse the leading article of the *Little Pedlington Gazette*. They read the advertisements in *Bradshaw*. They try to make out, from that publication, how to reach, by many corresponding trains, some little cross-country place to which they never intend to go. Anything rather than be idle: anything rather than lean back, quite devoid of occupation: and feel the Familiar Spirit worrying away within, as Prometheus felt the vulture at his liver. When I hear a young fellow say of some country place where he has been spending some time, that it is a horribly slow place, that it is the deadliest place on earth, I am aware that he did not find occupation there for Michael Scott's Familiar Spirit.

One looks with interest at people in whose case that Spirit seems to have been lulled into torpidity: has been brought to what a practical philosopher called *a dormouse state*. I read last night in a book how somebody 'leant his cheek on his hand and gazed abstractedly into the fire.' One who has trained the Familiar Spirit to an insatiable appetite for work, can hardly believe such a thing possible. You may remember a picture in a volume of the illustrated edition of the *Waverley Novels*, which represents a plump old abbot, sitting satisfied in a large chair, with the light of the fire on his face: doing nothing, thinking of nothing: and quite tranquil and content. One sometimes thinks, Would we could do the like! In the abbot the muscular power of the Familiar Spirit was abated: and its craving for work gone.

When you are wearied with long work, my reader, I wish you may have a place like this to which to

come and rest. How good and pleasant it is for a little while ! Your cares and burdens fall off from you. How insignificant many things look to one, sitting on this green grass, or looking over this bridge down into the green dell, that worried one in the midst of duty ! If you were out in a hurricane at sea, and your boat got at last into a little sheltered cove, you would be glad and thankful. But only for a short time. In a little, you would be weary of staying there. We are so made that we cannot for any length of time remain quiescent and do nothing. And we cannot live on the past. The Familiar Spirit will not chew the cud, so to speak : you must give him fresh provender to grind. Perhaps there have been days in your life which were so busy with hard work, so alive with what to you were great interests, so happy with a bewildering bliss, that you fancied you would be able to look back on them and to live in them all your life, and they would be a possession for ever. Not so. It is the present on which we must live. You can no more satisfy Michael Scott's Spirit with the remembrance of former occupations and enjoyments, than you can allay your present hunger with the remembrance of beef-steaks brought you by the plump head-waiter at 'The Cock' half-a-dozen years ago. Each day must bring its work : or the Spirit will be at you and stick pins into you.

A power of falling asleep enables one to evade the Spirit. At night, going to bed, looking for a sleepless night, how many a man has said, Oh for forgetfulness ! When you have escaped into *that* realm, the Spirit can trouble you no more. You know the wish which Hood puts on the lips of Eugene Aram, tortured by an unendurable recollection : that he could shut his mind and clasp it with a clasp, as he could close his book and clasp it. Few men are more to be envied

than those who have this power. Napoleon had it. So had the Duke of Wellington. At any moment either of these men could escape into a region where they were entirely free from the pressure of those anxieties which weighed them down while awake. Once the Duke with his aide-de-camp came galloping up to a point of the British lines whence an attack was to be made. He was told the guns would not be ready to open for two hours. 'Then,' said he, 'we had better have a sleep.' He sat down in a trench, leant his back against its side, and was fast asleep in a minute. That great man could at any time escape from Michael Scott's Spirit: could get into a country where the Spirit could not follow him. For in dreamless sleep you escape from yourself.

I have been told that there is another means of lulling that insatiable being into a state in which it ceases to be troublesome and importunate. It is tobacco. Some men say that the smoking of that fragrant weed soothes them into a perfect calm, in which they are pleasurabley conscious of existing, but have no wish to do anything. Let me confess, notwithstanding, that I esteem smoking as one of the most offensive and selfish of the lesser sins. When I see smoke pouring out of the window of a railway carriage not specially allotted to smokers, I go no farther for evidence that that carriage is occupied by selfish snobs.

Young children have Michael Scott's familiar Spirit to find employment for, just as much as their seniors. Who does not yet remember the horrible feeling which you expressed when a child by saying you had *nothing to do?* I have just heard a little thing say to his mother, 'Read me a story to make the time pass quick.' That was his way of saying 'to pacify the Familiar Spirit.' And we talk of *killing Time*, as

though he were an enemy to be reduced to helplessness. There is an offensive phrase which sets out the idea more distinctly. There are silly fellows who ask you what o'clock it is by saying '*How goes the enemy?*' This phrase indeed suggests thoughts too solemn and awful for this page. Let me ask, in a word, if Time be such, how about Eternity? But in every such case as those named, the enemy is not Time. It is Michael Scott's Familiar Spirit demanding occupation. How fast Time goes when the Spirit is pleasantly or laboriously employed! When people talk of killing Time, they mean knocking that strange being on the head, so to speak: stunning it for the hour. *That* may be done, but it is soon up again, importunate as ever.

I suppose, my reader, that you can remember times in which the face you loved best looked its sweetest; and tones, pleasanter than all the rest, of the voice that was always pleasantest to hear; thoughtful looks of the little child you seek in vain in the man in whom you lost it; and smiles of the little child that died. Touched as with the light of eternity, these things stand forth amid the years of past time: they are as the mountain tops rising over the mists of oblivion; they are the possessions which will never pass your remembrance till you cease to remember at all. And you know that Nature too has her moments of special transfiguration: times when she looks so fair and sweet that you are compelled to think that *she* would do well enough (for all the thorns and thistles of the Fall), if you could but get quit of the ever-intruding blight of Sin and Sorrow. Such a season is this bright morning: with its sunshine that seems to us (in our ignorance) fair and joyous enough for that Place where there is no night: with

its leaves green and living (would they but last) as we can picture of the Tree of Life: with its cheerful quiet that is a little foretaste of the perfect Rest which shall last for ever. It is very nearly time to go back to work: but we shall cherish this remembrance of the place; and so it will be green and sunshiny through winter days.

(1864.)

*Food*

## XII.

### CONCERNING UNPRUNED TREES.

ON this writing table, here in a great city, there lie two large pruning-knives, unused for five years. They look inconsistent enough with the usual belongings of the work-room of the incumbent of a town parish ; who on weekdays walks about chiefly upon paving-stones, and on Sundays preaches to city folk. But Britons know that there are institutions which the wise man would preserve, though their day and their use have passed away. So is it with these knives : buckthorn as to their handles, and black with rust as to their blades. The writer will never cast them away : will never lock them up in a drawer rarely visited, degrading them from the prominent and easily-reached spot where they lay in years that are gone. Never again, in all likelihood, will those knives be used by the hand that was wont to use them : yet they serve their owner well when they bring back the pleasant picture of days when he was a country parson and pruned many shrubs and trees : walking about leisurely in the enjoyment of snipping off, as a schoolmaster of my youth was accustomed to walk down the rows of boys busy in writing, here and there coming down with a heavy lash on some unlucky back, merely for his own recreation and with no moral aim. Yes, there is a tranquil delight in pruning : to a simple and un-

fevered mind it is a very fascinating pursuit. And it is a good sign of a man if he finds pleasure in it. Alas, we outgrow the days in which it makes us happy to prune trees !

The reader who is given to pruning, knows how very much some trees need it. You know how horribly awkward and ugly an old bay becomes, after it has been untended for years. It has great branches, which stick out most ungracefully. And it is likely enough that the whole tree is so inextricably grown into that ungainly form, that it is best to saw it off about three or four feet from the ground, and to let it begin to grow anew. Thus, starting afresh, you may be able to make it a pretty and graceful object, though of much diminished size. There are trees whose nature is such, that they can do with little or no pruning. They don't need to be watched : they cost no trouble. Such is a Portugal laurel : such is a weeping birch : such is a beech : such is an oak. But not such is an Irish yew : not such is an apple tree, nor any kind of fruit tree. And in the days when you were the possessor of trees, and were sometimes a good deal worried by the charge of them, I know you often thought what a blessing it is that there are some that need no pruning : some that once put in their place you may let alone. For there were some that needed ceaseless tending : they grew horrible unless you were always watching them, and cutting off this and that little shoot that was growing in a wrong direction. It was an awful thing, standing beside some tree that had given you a great amount of trouble, to think what it would come to if it were just left to itself.

Most human beings are very like the latter order of trees. They need a great deal of pruning. Little odd habits, the rudiments of worse habits, need every

now and then to be cut off and corrected. We should all grow very singular, ridiculous, and unamiable creatures, but for the pruning we have got from hands kind and unkind, from our earliest days: but for the pruning we are getting from such hands yet. Perhaps you have known a man who had lived for forty years alone. And you know what odd shoots he had sent out: what strange traits and habits he had acquired: what singular little ways he had got into. There had been no one at home to prune him: and the little shoots of eccentricity, of vanity, of vain self-estimation, that might have easily been cut off when they were green and soft, have now grown into rigidity: woody fibre has been developed; and if you were to try to cut off the oddity now, it would be like trying to lop off a tough oak branch a foot thick with a penknife. You cannot do it: if you were to succeed in doing it, you would thereby change the whole man. Equally grown into rigid awkwardness with the man who has lived a very solitary life, the man is likely to be who for many years has been the Pope of a little circle of admiring disciples, no one of whom would ever contradict him, no one of whom would ever venture to say he judged or did wrong. In such a case, not merely are the angularities, the odd ungainly shoots, not cut off: they are actually fostered. And a really good man grows into a bundle of awkwardnesses and oddities, and stiffens hopelessly into these. And these greatly lessen his influence and usefulness with people who do not know his real excellences. You cannot read the life of Mr. Simeon, of Cambridge, without lamenting that there was not some kind yet firm hand always near him, to prune off certain wretched little shoots which obscured in great measure the sterling qualities of the man. You may remember reading how on an occasion on which some good ladies had collected

pieces of needle-work to be sold for a missionary purpose, he came to behold them. He skipped into the room: held up his hands in a theatrical ecstasy of admiration: and went through various ungainly gambols, and uttered various wretched jokes, by way of compliment to the good ladies. I don't tell you the story at length: it is too humiliating. Now do you think the good man would ever have done this, had he lived among people who durst question his impeccability? What a blessing it would have been for him had there been some one on such terms with him that he could say, 'Now, Simeon, dear fellow, don't make a fool of yourself!'

It is at once apparent, that when some really kind and judicious friend, or even some judicious person who is not a kind friend, says to you as you are saying something, 'Smith, you're talking nonsense: do shut up;' this fact is highly analogous to the fact of a keen pruning knife snipping off a shoot that is growing in a wrong direction. And you may have seen a good man, accustomed to dwell among those who never dared to differ from him, look as if the world were suddenly coming to an end, when some courageous person said to his face what many persons had frequently said behind his back: to wit, that he was talking nonsense. You may find a house here and there, in which the gray mare is more energetic if not the better horse: where the husband has been constrained by years of outrageous ill-temper to give the wife her own way: and where, accordingly, the mistress of the house has lived for thirty years without once being told she did wrong. The tree, that is, has never been pruned in all that time: and you may imagine what an ugly and disagreeable tree it had grown. For people who get their own way, have nothing to repress their evil and ridiculous tendencies

except their own sense of propriety : and I have little faith in the practical guidance of that sense, unless it be reinforced and directed by the moral and æsthetic sense of other people. A tree, when pruned, suffers in silence : no doubt, it cannot like being pruned : it would like to have its own way. But the pruning of a human being, accustomed to his or her own way, is often accompanied by much moral kicking and howling. Such a person, in those years without pruning, has very likely got confirmed in many ridiculous and disagreeable habits : has learned to sit with his feet upon the mantel-piece : has come to use ungrammatical and ugly forms of speech : has grown into rubbing his nose, or twirling his thumbs, or making pills of paper while conversing with others : indeed, there is no reckoning the ugly growths into which unpruned human nature will develop itself ; and self-conceited and haughty and petted folk deliberately deprive themselves of that salutary training and pruning which is needful to keep them in decent shape. There was once a man who was much given to advocating the admission of fresh air : an excellent end. But, of course, in advocating it, the word *Ventilation* had frequently to be used ; and that man made himself ridiculous in the eyes of people by invariably pronouncing the word as *Ventulation*. For a long time, a youthful acquaintance of that man suffered in silence the terrible annoyance of listening to the word thus rendered : and there are few more irritating things among the minor vexations of life, than to be compelled habitually to listen to some vulgar and illiterate error in speech. Oh ! are there not expressions which make one's nerves tingle, and one's hand steal towards the pruning-knife. But after long endurance, the youthful relative of the man who talked about *Ventulation* could stand it no longer, and ventured

humbly to suggest that *Ventilation* was the preferable way of setting forth the word. Ah, the tree did not take the pruning peaceably ! Was not the youthful individual scorched with furious sarcasm, for pretending to know better than his seniors, and for venturing to think that his betters could go wrong ! From that day forward, he resolved that however hideous the shoots of ignorance and conceit his seniors put forth, *he* would not venture to correct them. For there is nothing that so infuriates a self-sufficient man of more than middle age, as the faintest and best-disguised attempt to prune him. 'Are you sure that your *data* is correct ?' said a vulgar rich man to an educated poor man. '*Data* ~~ARE~~ correct, I think you mean,' said the poor man rather hastily, before going on to answer the question. The rich man's face reddened like an infuriated turkey-cock ; and had there been a cudgel in his hand, he would have beaten the pruner upon the head. Yes : it is ~~thankless work to wield the moral pruning-knife.~~

Probably among the class of old bachelors you may find the most signal instances of the evil consequence of going through life with nobody to prune one. An old bachelor of some standing, living in a solitary house, with servants who dare not prune him, and with acquaintances who will not take the trouble to prune him, must necessarily, unless he be a very wise and good man, grow into a most amorphous shape. I beg the reader to mark the exception I make : for I presume he will agree with me when I say, that in the class of old bachelors and old maids, may be found some of the noblest specimens of the human race. A judicious wife is always snipping off from her husband's moral nature, little twigs that are growing in wrong directions. She keeps him in shape, by continual pruning. If you say anything silly, she will affec-

tionately tell you so. If you declare that you will do some absurd thing, she will find means of preventing your doing it. And by far the chief part of all the common sense there is in the world, belongs unquestionably to women. The wisest things a man commonly does, are those which his wife counsels him to do. It is not always so. You may have known a man do, at the instigation of his wife, things so malicious, petty, and stupid, that it is inconceivable any man should ever do them at all. But these cases are exceptional.

Doubtless you have remarked, with satisfaction, how the little oddities of men who marry rather late in life are pruned away speedily after their marriage. You have found a man who used to be shabbily and carelessly dressed, with a huge shirtcollar frayed at the edges, and a glaring yellow silk pocket handkerchief, broken off these things, and become a pattern of neatness. You have seen a man whose hair and whiskers were ridiculously cut, speedily become like other human beings. You have seen a man who used to sing ridiculous sentimental songs, leave them off. You have seen a man who took snuff copiously, abandon that habit. Wives are grand wielders of moral pruning-knives.

If Johnson's wife had lived, there would have been no hoarding up of bits of orange peel: no touching all the posts in walking along the streets: no eating and drinking with a disgusting voracity. If Oliver Goldsmith had been married, he would never have worn that memorable and ridiculous coat. Whenever you find a man whom you know little about, oddly dressed or talking absurdly, or exhibiting any eccentricity of manner, you may be tolerably sure that he is not a married man. For the little corners are rounded off, the little shoots are pruned away, in married men. When not positively foolish, women generally have

more common sense than their husbands, especially when the husband is clever; and feminine counsel is like ballast, and keeps the ship steady. They are like the wholesome though painful shears, snipping off little growths of self-conceit and folly.

So you may see, that it is not good for man to be alone. For he will put out various shoots at his own sour will, which will grow into monstrously ugly and absurd branches unless they are pruned away while they are young. But it is quite as bad, perhaps it is worse, to live among people with whom you are an Oracle. There are many good Protestants who, by a long continuance of such a life, have come to believe their own infallibility much more strongly than the Pope believes his. An only brother amid a large family of sisters, is in a perilous position. There is a risk of his coming to think himself the greatest, wisest, and best of men ; the most graceful dancer, the most melodious singer, the sweetest poet, the most unerring shot : also the best dressed man, and the possessor of the most beautiful hands, feet, eyes, and whiskers. And as the outer world is sure not to accept this estimate, the only brother is apt to be soured by the sharp contrast between the adulation at home and the snubbing abroad. A popular clergyman, with a congregation somewhat lacking in intelligence, is exposed to a prejudicial moral atmosphere. It is a great deal, too much for average human nature to live among people who agree with all one says, and think it very fine. We all need 'the animated No.' a forest tree will not grow up healthy and strong unless you let the rude blasts wrestle with it and root it firmer. It is insufferable when any mortal lives in a moral hothouse. And if there be anything for which a clergyman ought to be thankful, it is if his congregation, though duly esteeming him for his office and for

his work, have so much good sense as to refrain from spoiling him by deferring unduly to all his crotchets. Let there be as few worsted slippers as possible sent him. Let the phrase *dear man* be utterly excluded. A manly person does not want to be made a pet of. And if there be any occasion on which a man of sense, bishop or not, ought to be filled with shame and confusion, it is when man or woman kneels down and asks his blessing. Pray, how much is the blessing worth? What good will it do anybody? Most educated men have a very decided estimate of its value, which would be expressed in figures by a round o.

One great good of a great public school, is the way in which the moral pruning-knife is wielded there. I do not mean by the masters, but by the republic of boys. Many a lad of rank and fortune, in whom the evil shoots of arrogance, self-conceit, contempt for his fellow-creatures, and a notion that he himself is the mightiest of mortals, have been fostered at home by the adulation of cottagers and tenantry, has these evil shoots effectually shred away.

And there are few people in public life who in this age are not promptly pruned, where needful, by ever-ready shears: If the shoots of bumpiousness appear in a Chief Justice, they may be instantly cut short by the tongue of some resolute barrister. If a Prime Minister, or even a loftier personage, evinces a disposition to neglect his or her duty, that disposition is speedily pruned by the *Times*; speaking in the name of the general sense of what is fit. And indeed the newspapers and reviews are the universal shears. If any outgrowth of folly, error, or conceit, appear in a political man, or in a writer of even moderate standing, some clever article comes down upon it, and shows it up if it cannot snip it off. And if a wise man desires

that he may keep, intellectually and aesthetically, in becoming shape, he will attentively consider whatever may be said or written about him by people who dislike him. For, as a general rule, people who don't like you come down sharply upon your real faults : they tell you things which it is very fit that you should know ; and which nobody is likely to tell you but them. I have heard of one or two distinguished authors who made it a rule never to read anything that was written about themselves. Probably they erred in this. They missed many hints for which they might have been the better. And mannerisms and eccentricities developed into rigid boughs, which might have been readily removed as growing twigs.

A vain self-confidence is very likely to grow up in a man who is never subjected to the moral pruning-knife. The greatest men (in their own judgment) that you have ever known, have probably been the magnates of some little village, far from neighbours. Probably the bully is never developed more offensively than in some village dealer, who has accumulated a good deal of money, and who has got a number of the surrounding cottages mortgaged to him. Such is the man who is likely to insult the Conservative candidate, when he comes to make a speech before an election. Such is the man to lead the opposition to any good work proposed by the parish clergyman. Such is the man to become a church-rate martyr, or an especially offensive manager of Salem Chapel. Such is the kind of man who, if he has children growing up, will refuse to let them express their opinion on any subject. A parent can fall into no greater mistake than to take the ground that he will never argue with his children, nor hear what they may have to suggest in opposition to any plan he may have proposed. For children very speedily take the measure

of their parents ; and have a perfectly clear idea how far their ability, judgment, and education, justify their assuming the rank of infallible oracles. And it is infinitely better to let a lad of eighteen speak out his mind, than to have him like a boiler ready to burst with repressed views and feelings, and with the bitter sense of a petty and contemptible tyranny. Something has already been said of women who acquire the chief power in their own houses : whose husbands are cowed into cyphers : and whose infallibility is to be recognised throughout the establishment, under pain of some ferocious explosion. At last, some son grows up ; and resists the established despotism. Infallibility and impeccability are conceded no longer. And the thick branches, consolidated by many years' growth, are lopped off painfully, which should have gone when they were slender shoots. Rely upon it, the man or woman who refuses to be peaceably and kindly pruned, will some day have to bear being rudely lopped.

There is one shoot which human nature keeps putting forth again, however frequently it is pruned away. It is self-conceit. *That* would grow into a terrible unwieldy branch, if it were not so often shred away by circumstances : that is, by God's Providence. Everybody needs to be frequently taken down : which means to have his self-conceit pruned away. And what everybody needs, most people (in this case) get. Most people are very frequently taken down.

I mean even modest and sensible people. This wretched little shoot keeps growing again, however hard we try to keep it down. There is a tendency in each of us to be growing up into a higher opinion of ourself : and then, all of a sudden, that higher estimate is cut down to the very earth. You are like a sheep suddenly shorn : a thick fleece of self-complacency

had developed itself: something comes and all at once shears it off, and leaves you shivering in the frosty air. You are like a lawn, where the grass had grown some inches in length; till some dewy morning it is mown just as close as may be. You had gradually and insensibly come to think rather well of yourself, and your doings. You had grown to think your position in life a rather respectable or even eminent one; and to fancy that those around estimated you rather highly. But all of a sudden, some slight, some mortification, some disappointment comes: something is said or done that shows you how far you had been deceiving yourself. Some considerable place in your profession becomes vacant, and nobody thinks of naming you for it. You are in company with two or three men who think themselves specially charged with finding a suitable person for the vacant office: they name a score of possible people to fill it: but not you. They never have thought of you: or possibly they refrain from naming you, with the design of mortifying you. And so you are pruned close. For the moment, it is painful. You are ready to sink down disheartened and beaten. You have no energy to do anything. You sit down blankly by the fire, and acknowledge yourself a failure in life. It is not so much that you are beaten, as that you are set in a lower place than you hoped. Yet it is all good for us, doubtless. Few men can say they are too humble with it all. And, as even after all our mowings, prunings, and shearings we are sometimes so conceited and self-satisfied as we are, what should we have been had those things not befallen us! The elf-locks of wool would have been feet in length. The grass would have been six feet high, like that of the prairies. And the shoot of vanity would have grown and consolidated into a branch, that would have given a lop-sided aspect to the whole tree.

Happily, there is no chance of these things occurring. We seldom grow for more than a few days, without being pruned, mown, and shorn afresh. And all this will continue to the end. It is not pleasant; but we need it all. And we are all profiting by it. Possibly no one will read this page, who does not know that he thinks more humbly of himself now than he did ten years since. And ten years hence, if we live, we shall think of ourselves more humbly still.

Yes: we have all been severely pruned, in many ways. Perhaps our sprays and blossoms have been shred away by a knife so unsparing, that we are cut very much into the form of a pollarded tree. Perhaps we have been pruned too much; and the spring and the nonsense taken out of us only too effectually. Certain awkward knots are left in the wood, where some cherished hope was snipped off by the fatal shears, or some youthful affection (in the case of sentimental people) came to nothing; and it was like cutting a tree over, not far above the roots, when a man was made to feel that his entire aim in life was no better than a dismal failure. But it was all for the best; and defeat, bravely borne, is the noblest of victories. What an overbearing, insolent person you would have been, if you had always got your own way; if your boyish fancies had come true! What an odd stick you would have become, had you been one of the Unpruned Trees!

(1864.)

### XIII.

#### CONCERNING THINGS WHICH CANNOT GO ON.

OF course, in the full meaning of the words, Ben Nevis is one of the Things that cannot Go On. And among these, too, we may reckon the Pyramids. Likewise the unchanging ocean: and all the everlasting hills, which cannot be removed, but stand fast for ever.

But it is not such things that I mean by the phrase: it is not such things that the phrase suggests to ordinary people. It is not things which are passing, indeed; but passing so very slowly, and with so little sign as yet of their coming end, that to human sense they are standing still. I mean things which even we can discern have not the element of continuance in them: things which press it upon our attention as one of their most marked characteristics, that they have not the element of continuance in them. And you know there are such things. Things too good to last very long. Things too bad to be borne very long. Things which as you look at, you say to yourself, Ah, it is just a question of time! We shall not have *you* long!

This, as it appears to me, my reader, is the essential quality which makes us class anything among the Things which cannot Go On: it is that the thing should not merely be passing away, or even passing

away fast ; but that it shall bear on its very face, as the first thing that strikes us in looking at it, that it is so. There are passing things that have a sort of perennial look : things that will soon be gone, but that somehow do not press it upon us that they are going. If you had met Christopher North, in his days of affluent physical health, swinging along with his fishing-rod towards the Tweed, you might, if you had reflected, have thought that in truth all *that* could not go on. The day would come when that noble and lovable man would be very different : when he would creep along slowly, instead of tearing along with that springy pace : when he would no longer be able to thrash pugnacious gipsies, nor to outleap flying tailors : when he would not sit down at morning in his dusty study and rush through the writing of an article as he rushed through other things, impetuously, determinedly, and with marvellous speed, and hardly an intermission for rest : when mind and body, in brief, would be unstrung. But *that* was not what you thought of, in the sight of that prodigal strength and activity. At any rate, it was not the thought that came readiest. But when you see the deep colour on the cheek of a consumptive girl, and the too bright eye : when you see a man awfully overworking himself : when you see a human being wrought up to a frantic enthusiasm in some cause, good or bad : when you find a lady declaring that a recently-acquired servant, or a new-found friend, is absolute perfection : when you see a church crowded to discomfort, passages and all, by people who come to listen to its popular preacher : when you go to hear the popular preacher for yourself, and are interested and carried away by a sermon, evincing such elaborate preparation as no man, with the duty of a parish resting upon him, could possibly find time for in any single

week,—and delivered with overwhelming vehemence of voice and gesture: when you hear of a parish in which a new-come clergyman has set a-going an amount of parochial machinery which it would need at least three and probably six clergymen to keep working: when you see a family, living a cat-and-dog life: when you see a poor fellow, crushed down by toil and anxiety, setting towards insanity: when you find a country gentleman, with fifteen hundred a year, spending five thousand: when you see a man submitting to an insufferable petty tyranny, and commanding himself by a great effort, repeated several times a day, so far as not just yet to let fly at the tyrant's head: when you hear of King Bomba gagging and murdering his subjects, amid the reprobation of civilised mankind: when you see the stoker of an American steamer sitting upon his safety-valve, and observe that the indicator shows a pressure of a hundred and fifty pounds on the square inch of his boiler:—then, my friend, looking at such things as these, and beholding the end impending and the explosion imminent, you would say that these are Things which cannot Go On.

And then, besides the fact that in the case of very many of the Things which cannot Go On, you can discern the cause at work that must soon bring them to an end; there is a further matter to be considered. Human beings are great believers in what may be called the doctrine of Average. There is a deep conviction, latent in the ordinary mind, and the result of all its experience, that anything very extreme cannot last. If you are sitting on a winter evening in a chamber of a country house which looks to the north-east; and if a tremendous batter of wind and sleet suddenly dashes against the windows with a noise loud enough to attract the attention of everybody; I am

almost sure that the first thing that will be said, by somebody or other, in the first momentary lull in which it is possible to hear, will be, 'Well, *that* cannot last long.' We have in our minds, as regards all things moral and physical, some idea of what is the average state of matters: and whenever we find any very striking deviation from *that*, we feel assured that the deviation will be but temporary. When you are travelling by railway, even through a new and striking country, the first few miles enable you to judge what you may expect. The country may be very different indeed from that which you are accustomed to see, day by day: but still, a little observation of it enables you to strike an average, so to speak, of that country. And if you come suddenly to anything especially remarkable: to some enormously lofty viaduct, whence you look down upon the tops of tall trees and upon a foaming stream: or to some tunnel through a huge hill: or to some bridge of singular structure: or to some tract wonderfully wooded or wonderfully bare: you involuntarily judge that all this is something exceptional; that it cannot last long; that you will soon be through it, and back to the ordinary jog-trot way.

• And now, my friend, let me recall to mind certain facts connected with the great order of Things which cannot Go On: and let us compare our experience with regard to these.

Have you a residence in the country, small or great? Have you ever had such a residence? If you have one, or ever have had one, I have no doubt at all but there is or was a little gravelled walk, which you were accustomed often to walk up and down. You walked there, thinking of things painful and things pleasant. And if nature and training made you the human being for a country life, you found

that that little gravelled path could do you a great deal of good. When you went forth, somewhat worried by certain of the little cares which worry at the time but are so speedily forgotten, and walked up and down ; you found that at each turn you took, the path, with its evergreens at either hand, and with here and there a little bay of green grass running into the thick masses of green boughs and leaves, gently pressed itself upon your attention ; a patient friend, content to wait your time. And in a little space, no matter whether in winter or in summer, the path with its belongings filled your mind with pleasant little thoughts and cares ; and smoothed your forehead and quieted your nervous system. I am a great believer in grass and evergreens and gravelled walks. Was it not pleasant, when a bitter wind was blowing outside your little realm, to walk in the shelter of the yews and hollies, where the air felt so snug and calm : and now and then to look out beyond your gate, and catch the bitter East on your face, and then turn back again to the warm, sheltered walk ! Beautiful in frost, beautiful in snow, beautiful in rain, beautiful in sunshine, are clumps of evergreens : is green grass : and cheerful and healthful to our whole moral nature is the gravelled walk that winds between !

But all this is by the way. It is not of gravelled walks in general that I want to speak : but of one special phenomenon concerning such walks ; and bearing upon my proper subject. If you are walking up and down a path, let us say a hundred and fifty yards long, talking to a friend, or holding conversation with yourself ; and if at each turn you take, you have to bend your head to pass under an overhanging bough : here is what will happen. To bend your head for once will be no effort. You will do it instinctively, and never think about the matter. To stoop even six

times, will not be much. But if you walk up and down for an hour, that constant evading of the overhanging bough will become intolerably irksome. For a little it is nothing : but you cannot bear it if it is a thing that is to go on. Here is a fact in human nature. You can stand a very disagreeable and painful thing for once : or for a little while. But a very small annoyance, going on unceasingly, grows insufferable. No annoyance can possibly be slighter, than that a drop of cold water should fall upon your bare head. But you are aware that those ingenious persons, who have investigated the constitution of man with the design to discover the sensitive places where man can feel torture, have discovered what can be got out of that falling drop of water. Continue it for an hour ; continue it for a day : and it turns to a refined agony. It is a thing which cannot go on long, without driving the sufferer mad. No one can say what the effect might be, of compelling a human being to spend a week, walking, through all his waking hours, in a path where he had to bend his head to escape a branch every minute or so. You, my reader, did not ascertain by experiment what would be the effect. However pretty the branch might be, beneath which you had to stoop, or round which you had to dodge, at every turn ; that branch must go. And you cut away the blossoming apple-branch : you trained in another direction the spray of honeysuckle : you sawed off the green bough, beautiful with the soft beechen leaves. They had become things which you could not suffer to go on.

Have you ever been misled into living in your house, during any portion of the time in which it was being painted ? If so, you remember how you had to walk up and down stairs on planks, very steep and slippery : how, at early morning, a sound pervaded

the dwelling, caused by the rubbing your doors with stones, to the end of putting a smoother surface upon the doors: how your children had to abide in certain apartments under ground, to be beyond the reach of paint, and brushes, and walls still wet. The discomfort was extreme. You could not have made up your mind to go on through life, under the like conditions: but you bore it patiently, because it was not to go on. It was as when you shut your eyes, and squeeze through a thicket of brambles, encouraged by the hope of reaching the farther side. So when you are obliged to ask a man to dinner, with whom you have not an idea or sympathy in common. Suppressing the tendency to yawn, you force yourself to talk about things in which you have not the faintest interest: and you know better than to say a word upon the subjects for which you really care. You could not stand this: were it not that from time to time you furtively glance at the clock, and think that the time of deliverance is drawing near. And on the occasion of a washing-day, or a change of cook, you put up without a murmur with a dinner to which you could not daily subdue your heart. We can go on for a little space, carried by the impetus previously got, and by the hope of what lies before us. It is like the dead points in the working of a steam-engine. You probably know that many river steamboats have but a single engine: and that there are two points, each reached every few seconds, at which a single engine has no power at all. The paddle wheels continue to turn, in virtue of the strong impetus already given them. Now, it is plain to every mind, that if the engine remained for any considerable period at the point where it is absolutely powerless, the machinery driven by the engine would stop. But in practice, the difficulty is very small: because it is but for a second or two that the engine

remains in this state of paralysis. It does quite well for a little: but is a state that could not go on.

Any very extreme feeling, in a commonplace mind, is a thing not likely to go on long. Very extravagant likes and dislikes: very violent grief, such as people fancy must kill them: will, in most cases, endure not long. In short, anything that flies in the face of the laws which regulate the human mind: anything which is greatly opposed to Nature's love for the Average: cannot, in general, go on. I do not forget, that there are striking exceptions. There are people, who never quite get over some great grief or disappointment: there are people who form a fixed resolution, and hold by it all through life. I have seen more than one or two men and women, whose whole soul and energy were so devoted to some good work, that a stranger, witnessing their doings for a few days, and hearing their talk, would have said, 'That cannot last. It must soon burn itself out, zeal like that!' But if you had made enquiry, you would have learned that all *that* had gone on unflagging, for ten, twenty, thirty years. There must have been sound and deep principle there at the first, to stand the wear of such a time: and you may well believe that the whole nature is now confirmed irretrievably in the old habit; you may well hope that the good Christian and philanthropist who has gone on for thirty years, will go on as long as he lives;—will go on for ever. But, as a general rule, I have no great faith in the stability of human character: and I have great faith in the law of Average. People will not go on very long, doing what is inconvenient for them to do. And I will back Time against most feelings and most resolutions in human hearts. It will beat them in the end. You are a clergyman, let us suppose. Your congregation are fond of your sermons. They have got into your

way: and if so, they probably like to hear you preach, better than anybody else; unless it be the two or three very great men. A family, specially attached to you, moves from a house near the church, to another two or three miles away. They tell you, that nothing shall prevent their coming to their accustomed places every Sunday still: they would come, though the distance were twice as great. They are perfectly sincere. But your larger experience of such cases makes you well aware that time, and distance, and mud, and rain, and hot sunshine, will beat them. Coming to church over that inconvenient distance, is a thing that cannot go on. It is a thing that ought not to go on: and you make up your mind to the fact. You cannot vanquish the laws of Nature. You may make water run up hill, by laborious pumping. But you cannot go on pumping for ever: and whenever the water is left to its own nature, it will certainly run down hill. All such declarations as 'I shall never forget you: ' 'I shall never cease to deplore your loss: ' 'I can never hold up my head again: ' may be ethically true: but time will prove them logically false. The human being may be quite sincere in uttering them: but he will change his mind.

I do not mean to say that it is very pleasant to have to think thus: or that much good can come of dwelling too long upon the idea. It is a very chilling and sorrowful thing, to be reminded of all this in the hard, heartless way in which some old people like to drive the sad truth into the young. It is very fit and right that the girl of twenty, broken-hearted now because the young contemporary she is fond of is gone off to Australia, should believe that when he returns in five years he will find her unchanged: and should resent the remotest suggestion that by that time she will probably think and feel quite differently. It is

fit and right that she should do all this, even though a prescient eye could discern that in two years exactly she will be married to somebody else: and married, too, not to some old hunx of great wealth whom her parents have badgered her into marrying against her will; but (much worse for the man in Australia, who has meanwhile taken to drinking) married with all her heart to some fine young fellow, very suitable in age and all other respects. Yet, certain though the general principle may be, a wise and kind man or woman will not take much pleasure in imparting the sad lesson, taught by experience, to younger hearts. No good can come of doing so. Bide your time, my friend: and the laws of Nature will prevail. Water will not long run up hill. But while the stream is quite happy and quite resolute in flowing up an incline of one in twenty, there is no good in standing by it, and in roaring out that in a little while it will get tired of *that*. Experience tells us several things, which are not quite to the credit of our race: and it is wrong to chill a hopeful and warm heart with these. We should be delighted to find that young heart falsifying them by its own history: let it do so if it can.

And it is chilling and irritating to be often reminded of the refrigerating power of Time upon all warm feelings and resolutions. I have known a young clergyman, appointed early in life to his first parish; and entering upon his duty with tremendous zeal. I think a good man, however old, would rejoice at such a sight: would delightedly try to direct and counsel all that hearty energy, and to turn all that labour to the best account. And even if he thought within himself that possibly all this might not quite last, I don't think he would go and tell the young clergyman so. And the aged man would thankfully remember, that he has known instances in which all that *has* lasted;

and would hope that in this instance it might last again. But I have known a cynical, time-hardened old man (the uncle, in fact, of my friend Mr. Snarling), listen with a grin of mingled contempt and malignity to the narration of the young parson's doings ; and explain the whole phenomena by a general principle, inexpressibly galling and discouraging to the young parson. 'Oh,' says the cynical, heartless old gentleman, 'new brooms sweep clean !' That was all. The whole thing was explained and settled. I should like to apply a new knout to this cynic, and see if it would cut smartly.

And then we are to remember, that though it be only a question of time with the existence of anything, *that* does not prove that the thing is of no value. A great part of all that we are enjoying, consists of Things which cannot Go On. And though the wear that there is in a thing be a great consideration in reckoning its worth ; and more especially, in the case of all Christian qualities, be the great test whether or not they are genuine ; yet things that are going, and going very fast, have their worth. And it is very fit that we should enjoy them while they last ; without unduly over-clouding our enjoyment of them by the recollection of their evanescence. 'Why,' said an eminent divine,— 'why should we pet and pamper these bodies of ours, which are soon to be reduced to a state of mucilaginous fusion ?' There was a plausibility about the question : and for about half a minute it tended to make you think, that it might be proper to leave off taking your daily bath, and brushing your nails and teeth : likewise that instead of patronising your tailor any further, it might be well to assume a horse-rug : and also that it might be unworthy to care for your dinner, and that for the future you should live on raw turnips. But of course anything that revolts common

sense can never be a part of Christian doctrine or duty. And the natural reply to the rhetorical question I have quoted would of course be, that after these mortal frames are so fused, we shall wholly cease to care for them: but that meanwhile we shall suitably tend, feed, and clothe them, because it is comfortable to do so: because it is God's manifest intention that we should do so: because great moral and spiritual advantage comes of our doing so: and because you have no more right to disparage and neglect your wonderful mortal frame, than any other talent or gift confided to you by God. Why should we neglect, or pretend to neglect, these bodies of ours, with which we are commanded to glorify God: which are bought with Christ's blood: which, even through the last lowliness of mortal dissolution, even when turned to dust again, are 'still united to Christ:' and which are to rise again in glory and beauty, and be the redeemed soul's companion through eternity? And it is a mere sophism to put the shortness of a thing's continuance, as a reason why it should not be cared for while it lasts. Of course, if it last but a short time, all the shorter will be the time through which we shall care for it. But let us make the best of things while they last: both as regards our care for them and our enjoyment of them.

That a thing will soon be done with: that the cloud will soon blow by: is a good reason for bearing patiently what is painful. But it is very needless to thrust in this consideration, to the end of spoiling the enjoyment of what is pleasant. I have seen people, when a little child, in a flutter of delighted anticipation, was going away to some little merry-making, anxious to put down its unseemly happiness by severely impressing the fact, that in a very few hours all the pleasure would be over, and lessons would begin again.

And I have seen, with considerable wrath, a cloud descend upon the little face at the unwelcome suggestion. What earthly good is to come of this piece of stupid, well-meant malignity? It originates, doubtless, in that great fundamental belief in many narrow minds, that the more uncomfortable you are, the likelier you are to be right: and that God is angry when He sees people happy. Unquestionably, most of the little enjoyments of life are very transient. All pleasant social gatherings: all visits to cheerful country houses: all holidays: are things which cannot go on. No doubt that is true: but that is no reason why we should sulkily refuse to enjoy them while they last. There is no good end secured, by persisting in seeing 'towers decayed as soon as built.' It is right, always latently, and sometimes expressly, to remember that they must decay: but meanwhile, let us be thankful for their shelter and their beauty. Sit down, happily, on a July day, beneath the green shade of your beeches: do not needlessly strain what little imagination you have, to picture those branches leafless, and the winter wind and clouds racking overhead. Enjoy your parcel of new books when it comes, coming not often: cut the leaves peacefully, and welcome in each volume a new companion: then carefully decide the fit place on your shelves where to dispose the pleasant accession to your store: and do not worry yourself by the reflection that when you die, the little library you collected may perhaps be scattered: and the old, friendly-looking volumes fall into no one knows whose hands: perhaps be set forth on out-door bookstalls: or be exhibited on the top of a wall, with a sack put over them when it begins to rain, as in a place which I have seen. 'What is the use of washing my hands!' said a little boy in my hearing: 'they will very soon be dirty

again ! ' Refuse, my reader, to accept the principle implied in the little boy's words : however specious it may seem. Whitewash your manse, if you be a Scotch minister, some time in April : paint your house in town, however speedily it may again grow black. Write your sermons diligently : write them on the very best paper you can get, and in a very distinct and careful hand : and pack them with attention in a due receptacle. It is, no doubt, only a question of time how long they will be needed, before the day of your departure shall make them no more than waste paper. Yet, though things which cannot go on, you may hope to get no small use out of them, to others and to yourself, before the time when the hand that travelled over the pages shall be cold with the last chill ; and the voice that spoke these words shall be hushed for ever. We know, obscurely, what we shall come to : and by God's grace we are content and we hope to be prepared : but there is no need to overcast all life with the ceaseless anticipation of death. You may have read how John Hampden's grave was opened, at the earnest desire of an extremely fat nobleman, who was his injudicious admirer. The poor wreck of humanity was there : and, as the sexton said, ' We propped him up with a shovel at his back, and I cut off a lock of his hair.' I hold with Abraham, who ' buried his dead from his sight ; ' I hold with Shakespeare, who desired that no one should disturb him in his lowly bed, till He shall awaken him whose right it is to do so. Yet I read no lesson of the vanity of Hampden's life, in that last sad picture of helplessness and humiliation. He had come to *that* : yet all this does not show that his life was not a noble one while it lasted, though now it was done. He had his day : and he used it : whether well or ill let wiser men judge. And if it be right to say

that he withstood tyranny, and helped to lay the foundation of his country's liberties, the whim of Lord Nugent and the propping up with the shovel can take nothing away from that.

You understand me, my friend. You know the kind of people who revenge themselves upon human beings who meanwhile seem happy, by suggesting the idea that it cannot last. You see Mr. A., delighted with his beautiful new church : you know how Miss B. thinks the man to whom she is to be married next week, the handsomest, wisest, and best of mankind : you behold the elation of Mr. C. about that new pair of horses he has got : and if you be a malicious block-head, you may greatly console yourself in the spectacle of the happiness of those individuals, by reflecting, and perhaps by saying, that it is all one of those things that cannot go on. Mr. A. will in a few months find no end of worry about that fine building : Miss B.'s husband, at present transfigured to her view, will settle into the very ordinary being he is : and Mr. C.'s horses will prove occasionally lame, and one of them a permanent roarer. Yet I think a wise man may say, I am aware I cannot go on very long ; yet I shall do my best in my little time. I look at the right hand which holds my pen. The pen will last but for a short space ; yet that is no reason why I should slight it now. The hand may go on longer. Yet, warm as it is now, and faithfully obeying my will as it has done through all those years, the day is coming when it must cease from its long labours. And, for myself, I am well content that it should be so. Let us not strive against the silent current, that bears us all away and away. Let us not quarrel with the reminders we meet on many country gravestones, addressed to us who are living from the fathers who have gone before. Yet

you will think of Charles Lamb. He said (but nobody can say when Elia meant what he said), 'I conceive disgust at those impertinent and unbecoming familiarities, inscribed upon your ordinary tombstones. Every dead man must take upon himself to be lecturing me with his odious truism, that "Such as he now is I must shortly be." Not so shortly, friend, perhaps as thou imaginest. In the meantime I am alive. I move about. I am worth twenty of thee. Know thy betters !'

You may look on somewhat farther, in a sweet country burying-place. Dear old churchyard, once so familiar : with the old oaks and the gliding river, and the purple hills looking over : where the true heart of Jeanie Deans has mouldered into dust : I wonder what you are looking like to-day ! Many a time have I sat, in the quiet summer day, on a flat stone : and looked at the green graves : and thought that they were Things that could not Go On ! *There* were the graves of my predecessors : the day would come when old people in the parish would talk, not unkindly, of the days, long ago, when some one was minister whose name is neither here nor there. But it was a much stranger thing to think, in that silent and solitary place, of the great stir and bustle there should be in it some day ! Here it has been for centuries : the green mossy stones and the little grassy undulations. But we know from the best of all authority, that 'the hour is coming' which shall make a total change. This quiet, this decay, this forgetfulness, are not to Go On !

We look round, my reader, on all our possessions, and all our friends : and we discern that there are the elements of change in all. 'I am content to stand still,' says Elia, 'at the age to which I am arrived : I, and my friends : to be no younger, no richer, no

handsomer: I do not want to be weaned by age; or drop like mellow fruit, into the grave.' There are indeed moods of mind, in which all thoughtful men have possibly yielded to a like feeling: but I never heard but of one other man whose deliberate wish was just to go on in this round of life for ever. Yet, though content to be in the wise and kind hands in which we are, we feel it strange to find how all things are going. Your little children, my friend, are growing older: growing out of their pleasant and happy childhood: the old people round you are wrinkling up, and breaking down. And in your constitution, in your way of life, there are things which cannot go on. There is some little physical malady, always rather increasing: and you cannot always be enlarging the doses of the medicine that is to correct it, or the opiates which make you sleep. I confess, with sorrow, that when I see an extraordinarily tidy garden, or a man dressed with special trimness, I cannot help looking forward to a day when all that is to cease: when the man will be somewhat slovenly; when the garden will be somewhat weedy. I think especially of the garden: and the garden which comes most home to me is the manse garden. It was a marvel of exquisite neatness and order: but a new minister comes, who does not care for gardening: and all *that* goes. And though rejoicing greatly to see a parish diligently worked, yet sometimes I behold the parochial machinery driven with such a pressure of steam, that I cannot but think it never will last. I have known men who never could calmly think: who lived in a hurry and a fever. There are places where it costs a constant effort, not always a successful effort, to avoid coming to such a life: but let us strive against it. Let us not have constant push, and excitement, and high pressure. I hate to feel a whirl around me, as of a huge cotton

mill. Let us 'study to be quiet!' And I have observed that clergymen who set that feverish machinery a-going, generally find it expedient to get away from it as speedily as may be, so as to avoid the discredit of its breaking down in their hands: being well aware that it is a thing which cannot go on. We cannot always go at a tearing gallop, with every nerve tense. Probably we are doing so, a great deal too much. If so, let us definitely moderate our pace, before the pace kills us.

'It's a long lane that has no turning,' says the proverb, testifying to the depth of human belief in the Average: testifying to our latent conviction that anything very marked is not likely to go on. A great many people, very anxious and unhappy and disappointed, cherish some confused hope that surely all this has lasted so long, things must be going to mend. The night has been so long, that morning must be near: even though there be not the least appearance of the dawn as yet. If you have been a briefless barrister, or an unemployed physician, or an unbefriended clergyman, for a pretty long time; even though there be no apparent reason now, more than years since, why success should come, you are ready to think that surely it must be coming now, at last. It seems to be overdue, by the theory of Average. Yet it is by no means certain that there is a good time coming, because the bad time has lasted long. Still, it is sometimes so. I have known a man, very laborious, very unfortunate, with whom everything failed: and after some years of this, I have seen a sudden turn of fortune come. And with exactly the same merit and the same industry as before, I have beheld him succeed in all he attempted, and gain no small eminence and reputation. 'It behoved him to dree his weird,' as was said by Meg Merrilies: and then the

good time came. If you are happy, my reader, I wish your happiness may last. And if you are meanwhile somewhat down and depressed, let us hope that all this may prove one of the Things which cannot Go On !

(1864.)

## XIV.

### LITTLE TO SHOW.

AGAIN among Perthshire hills and lakes, Perthshire woods and rocks, the broom and the heather. And this after not thinking ever to see them more. It was partly a mistake when somebody said that to enjoy what is present you must have a long prospect ahead. To some people, in some moods, that is so. But you will find out that when you are coming slowly out of a severe illness, which brought you face to face with the great Change: when you take each day and are thankful for it, not thinking of another: when you know that present ease may be a brief reprieve before the iron grasp of pain again takes hold of you: you enjoy things as keenly as ever. I venture to differ from Mr. Ruskin. There is no human being who has not many times differed from Mr. Ruskin. No one can admire him more, or in many things more heartily accept his teaching. But it was a morbid and transient mood, it was the shadow of his great illness coming upon him, when he said, that at fifty-three he could no longer look with pleasure at the setting sun.

Now in this audible stillness of the beautiful summer evening, let us walk two miles towards the sunset, golden and red, glorious beyond remembering when it is gone. We have come up a wooded

valley : and here you may sit down on a little bridge, where a quiet stream steals out from a beautiful loch. The steep and shaggy banks make its edges black, but the broad central sheet of water still brightly reflects the sky. Do not call the word *lock*, ignorant Saxon : you can easily say *loch* if you try. Still less, affected whipper-snapper of a denationalised Scot, venture to forswear your birthright, and talk of a *lock* to me. As sure as you do, I shall inflict appropriate and condign punishment. I will investigate how near you are in blood to the Eldership of the Scotch Kirk ; and make the fact known to your Anglican acquaintances, to your deep mortification. For the fact would not mortify you, unless you were a very poor creature.

The summer has been cold and rainy : the season is late. All the pleasanter, pleasant beyond words, have come this glittering sunshine, this sapphire sky, these golden and crimson clouds, covering all the West. And beautiful things are still present with us, which in other years would have been past and gone. Though this be one of the first four days of August, the touch of Autumn might be here : it was here this day twelvemonths. But this evening, these quiet miles, a blaze of briar roses, red and white, has lighted up the hedges on either hand : and all the way the air has been sweet with the fragrance of the breathing clover. The broom, in patches, still keeps its yellow flowers. Though now it is near nine o'clock, the twilight is like daylight to one coming out from that dark avenue of thick trees ; and the great moon, sailing above, yellow as is the summer moon, adds no appreciable light because none is needed. Here is the first holiday : and it comes as welcome as in departed years.

Times come, leisure times in a busy life, times when unwonted illness enforces cessation of accustomed

work, in which you look back over the way you have come ; you turn over your diary (commonly a saddening and humbling experience) : you think of much labour, of the full exertion of what little might you had : and ask yourself, What is to Show ? What is the outcome of it all ? What abiding result is there of all you have done, beyond the mere bearing of the burden of the day that was passing over you ? Is there any ? Yes, there is some. But it is very little.

Of course you remember that there are morbid views, which in a little will go. There are transient moods, not to be mistaken for the abiding mind. As in all matters of opinion the last appeal must lie to the average good sense of average mankind, so to discover your own resultant and permanent judgment you must eliminate exceptional and hasty judgments, formed under temporary pressure. Unless you be a fool, perennial and incurable, you are well aware that very often, for short spaces, you have thought and judged like an inexpressible fool. Sometimes, too, it may be that for periods which passed with lightning swiftness, you have been an immense deal wiser and farther-seeing than your average.

In these transient seasons when you form exceptional judgments, by-and-by to go, you have known what it is to conclude that all your life has been a wretched failure, and all you have done beneath contempt. As for what you have written (if anything), you really think it is even worse than an amiable brother in the like vocation with yourself declared it to be in the Whistlebinkie halfpenny paper. The writer of moderate sense is often surprised that the unfriendly critic fails to put his finger upon the weakest points in what he contemns. Now, seeing how much better and more successfully you will do your work when you have confidence in yourself : not to men-

tion how much happier you will be in doing it; you may occasionally have thought that he was a wise man, that Weaver of Kilwinning, proverbially known over the West of Scotland, concerning whom only this fact is recorded, that he earnestly entreated his Maker for a good opinion of himself. *A good conceit of himself*, was the expressive phrase of Ayrshire in the writer's boyhood.

One has often thought that there is something specially cheering about work which leaves something to show. At College you pored a long evening over a knotty bit of *Æschylus*; at last you thought you had mastered it; but the acquisition was invisible and intangible. But when you had composed a few Greek Iambics, or written a page or two of an essay, here was something done concerning which there could be no question. What your work might be worth was a different matter; but if it were your very best, the pleasantest smile in all this world (if Wordsworth be right) beamed quietly upon you; and here was something tangible accomplished. The Chorus of *Æschylus*, in after years, would be quite forgot. Yes, and when you looked then at your old prize essay, it would be as strange to its author as to any one else. But at least the fading pages are there, for what they are worth. And if intellectual labour (let us say headwork) often leave no apparent memorial or result, yet more imponderable is the result of moral struggle. You fight with a bad habit: you daff aside a temptation: you try to grow better tempered, or at least to suppress the unworthy speech or act in which ill-temper would reveal itself: but not merely is there nothing to show; you are very far from being sure that you have indeed attained even an invisible possession. As for the human beings (by many esteemed as holding an enviable place in

life) who have nothing to do but to amuse themselves, their daily proceedings leave no trace at all. If, like Chatterton's hero, they 'sum the actions of the day at night before they sleep,' one would think they must feel very uncomfortable. But the enjoyment of the sense that something has been attempted and done in the day that has gone over is probably an acquired taste. And Southey's daily exercise with his pen came to be very much like some old gentleman's daily strokes at Golf. Only Southey's pen left its abiding traces, which oftentimes were indeed worth extremely little; while the old golfer's strokes are without apparent result. You may say, of course, that they brought him health and cheerfulness. But health and cheerfulness are not what I mean when I speak of something to show. I mean a visible and abiding result of past work, which you can see and handle: the book written, the house built, the picture painted, the waving harvest-field, the money saved and invested. Sir Gilbert Scott, looking at the churches he had built and restored (and let grumblers say what they please, he was a very great architect): Robert Stephenson, looking at the London and Birmingham Railway, and the Menai Bridge: Mr. Gladstone, regarding the enactments he has added to the Statute book; and Mr. Disraeli, thinking of a great Party which he had educated with a vengeance; have known the special sensation implied in having a vast ~~dea~~ to show. For better or worse, such men have left their mark on their age. But with ordinary folk, living an ordinary life, even a busy one, pretty nearly all energy goes to bear the burden of the day that is passing over and to do the work it brings; and hardly any abiding result survives and endures.

When human beings are subjected to the process which used to be called being *brought to book*, the

result is for the most part very humbling. For being brought to book means that, instead of one's being allowed to estimate himself and his work by vague impressions, you are brought to the accurate and searching test of arithmetical verity. Isaac Disraeli gives in one of his works a careful calculation of the number of volumes which it is possible for a man actually to read in a lifetime: the number is startlingly small. If you count the number actually present at a large meeting of men and women, it will prove to be just about half what it would have been reckoned to be, even by those not unaccustomed to see large meetings. If the gathering be one of thousands, it will count up to about one-sixth or one-eighth of what an unexperienced person would call it. Many folk have an impression that in the winter sky they have seen at once many thousands of stars: some would say many millions. Not reckoning nebular gleams, the number of stars the human eyes can see is not two thousand. And when very laborious mortals are brought to book as to the time which can be habitually given to work in the twenty-four hours, the result is surprising and it is taking down. Large spaces must needs be given to sleep, and food, and raiment. A lengthened portion of each year goes to the dismal process of shaving. The morning tub, in a year, engages an appreciable amount of your conscious life. From the moment at which you rise in the morning till the moment when you take steadfastly to work, having had breakfast and glanced over the newspaper, and (if in the country) having had a little turn in the open air, have not two hours gone? I am not going into details. But, as a fact, the time in each day for which the machinery of mind and body can be driven at full pressure, is surprisingly brief: and of that time no small measure

goes to the doing of work which must needs be done, but which leaves no trace. It would leave traces, and painful ones, were it neglected. The answering your letters, answer them as briefly as you may, exhausts time and energy daily. You mow down the worrying crop: but next morning there it is again. I speak of ordinary professional folk, with their moderate correspondence. Bishops, and their kind, with thirty letters to write each day, every one requiring thought, and several demanding anxious consideration, can have little energy left for any writing else. It is no wonder if they preach extempore, or give old sermons or sermons written off at a sitting:

And yet, an immense deal of work can be done in not so many years by one whose vitality is not frittered away by the unceasing and worrying calls of professional and domestic life. Mr. Buckle died at forty, having acquired an amount of knowledge which seemed marvellous. Yet when near twenty, he could not read nor write. Twenty years sufficed to accumulate the stores of which we have startling glimpses in the *History of Civilisation*. But Mr. Buckle was rich. And Mr. Buckle was unmarried.

If you, being a brain-driving man, and getting on through the years of middle age, should be struck down by serious illness, which gives you a very near view of the solemn End, it will probably be in your experience as you are gradually getting better that you will frequently think how many men who did good work in this world died no older than yourself. Several times in each day it will be impressed upon you how many these men are: and the upshot will be that you will be brought to even a humbler view of the little you have yourself done in your life than you commonly suffer under. I do not think, saying

this, of the great geniuses in Poetry, in Painting, in Music, who go at thirty-seven ; Mozart and Mendelssohn, Raphael, Byron, Burns : nor of the wild crew of the earlier English dramatists, whose insane career told in such fashion on body and soul that it must needs be brief. It is very startling to think that Shakespeare learnt all he knew, and said it as he has done, and died at fifty-one. Thackeray died at fifty-two ; Spenser at forty-nine ; Arnold died at forty-eight. There was a man, of whom no reader of this page ever heard, who was a really great ecclesiastic in a small sphere ; wielding for many years an influence which in such a sphere is not gained unless through lengthened time. His name was Andrew Thomson : and he died at fifty-two. There never was a greater advocate at the English Bar than Follett. He died at forty-six. Dickens had done the work on which his fame rests at a very early age ; but, with his nervous system, the wonder is he surpassed thirty-seven. With that hysterical sensibility, it is marvellous that he reached fifty-seven. We must beware, however, of classifying ourselves with the immortals, even as concerns their years. For by simply classifying ourselves with these, we may subject ourselves to several mortifications. There was a decent man in recent days, who had published certain volumes of inexpressibly unreadable verse. On a certain occasion he was conversing with a friend, and (as was his wont) he led the talk to that which was with him the greatest of all subjects. With a sigh, he said that it behoved him to be diligent in making the most of the time which remained to him, forasmuch as his time was short. His friend asked, with awakened curiosity, what it was he meant. 'Ah,' he replied mournfully, 'you know all great geniuses die at thirty-seven.' The friend, eager to

comfort him, entreated him to discard the notion that he was to be prematurely cut off ; assuring him that he did not run the smallest risk of dying at the age peculiar to great geniuses. But the friend informed me that instead of being cheered by the communication and grateful to him who conveyed it, the poet glowed with indignation.

I see Follett yet, getting wearily out of his carriage at the door of the Guildhall Courts in the morning, to begin his day's work. It was a high, old-fashioned chariot ; and he generally left his *Times*, opened up in untidy fashion, lying on its floor. I see the worn, pale face, not without a look of suffering ; the short iron-gray hair ; as the great advocate slowly and stiffly walked up the steps, eagerly eyed by divers young Templars who vainly thought they were some day to rival him. In a few minutes, arrayed now in his wig and gown, he would be opening a case in the Queen's Bench, with mellifluous flow of speech hardly ever rivalled, and with little peculiarities of expression long forgotten. He was fond of the unclassical word *colluding* : and though men in general speak of pounds, shillings, and pence, and Americans of dollars and cents, Follett always spoke of *a thousand pound*. Does any great American lawyer say that a man is worth (*i.e. has*, probably he *is worth* nothing) *a million dollar* ? The old days come back, wherein the writer paced the classic shades of the Temple, and honestly studied the Law : days for which there is nothing earthly now to show, and wherein his life was millions of miles away from that of these latter years. Not one in a thousand of the human beings among whom he lives knows what the Temple means, or has the faintest idea of what is meant by a Master in Chancery. And probably the writer alone among all living Scottish theologians has read and abstracted

Blackstone's Commentaries and Chitty's Practice. It is too plain that most of his brethren are all abroad as to the functions of a Special Pleader; and that some of them fancy that to *join issue* means exactly the opposite of what it does. A minute before Follett drove up, a great rosy-faced man of above six feet, mounted on a huge high-trotting horse, had rode at a lumbering but rapid pace right round the little space which the Guildhall fronts, stopped at the side door leading to the Courts, clumsily thrown himself off, and hustled up the steps with a large pair of white macintosh leggings and a stern expression of countenance. He was a great man then, and one looked at him with all respect; but save a very ill-written memoir in one volume, there is nothing to show for him now: his place has been twice emptied and twice filled since then: but many of the writer's standing must remember him well, and his deep voice, and his graceful dignity on the Bench, and his unfailing courtesy. He was the Chief Justice of England, Lord Denman; and his earlier career had been a strange one. The days were in which betting men would have laid any odds that he never would hold that office; or any other from which unscrupulous malignity, mindful of the deserved lash laid upon it, could keep him back; unscrupulous malignity in what by courtesy must be called high places. Lower places, if there be such things as right and wrong, could not be. Doubtless Lord Denman's old office is now far more brilliantly filled: neither as Advocate nor as Judge could you call it other than a far cry from Denman to Cockburn: but the present Chief Justice\* does not look the thing at all like his majestic predecessor. *Par negotiis neque supra* was all one could say, in that old time, in the Queen's Bench.

\* Written in 1879.

The patient, kindly, fully equipped Tindal, C.J., presided in the Common Pleas: and the incomparable Advocate in all trials by Jury, in such surpassing Follett, surpassing Wilde, surpassing all men, Scarlett, whom ill-luck and envy had held back for many years, was Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and not a very great Judge. I see him, sitting in his shabby and uncomfortable Court, with rubicund visage and a black patch over one eye, taking notes diligently with a dirty old steel pen with a broken handle. It was second-class business that went to the Exchequer in those days: and second-class Counsel pleaded there. Wilde was supreme in the Common Pleas: Next, but a long way off, was Talfourd. Farther down, Bompas and Channell. A few Serjeants sat there wearily, with nothing earthly to do. I remember their names well, but I shall not record them: I see their faces, very sorrowful faces: as a boy, I pitied them heartily. Ah, years after I was told by a relation of the most briefless of all (the relation did not know that I knew the C.P. as now I know my parish church), how he was just going to be made a Judge when in fact he suddenly was not. He was just as near being made a Judge as I this day am to being made Pope. Let no relative of a briefless barrister ever make any statement concerning him to a member of the Honourable Society of the Outer Temple unless the statement be true. For the Templar will know the facts, exactly: though politeness (not to say pity) may hinder his stating them. In the Queen's Bench was the Attorney-General, the emaciated old Scotsman Sir Frederick Pollock: Senior Wrangler in his day: a good lawyer and a courteous gentleman. Then Follett, Solicitor-General; of whom no more need be said. Hardly behind Follett in practice, the closely-shaven, thin-faced, tall and graceful Thesiger:

for many a year as popular an advocate as the English Bar has known: an eminently successful getter of verdicts. Yet once, in cynical humour, disgusted by some specially idiotic Jury, he said in the writer's hearing that after a case had been tried, and the Judge had summed up, and the Jury retired, he would be quite content, instead of waiting for the verdict, that a half-crown should be tossed up, and heads or tails decide the matter. It was he who, coming out of the House of Commons, was addressed by a matter-of-fact Member, pointing to Canning's statue, with the sagacious remark, 'Canning was not so tall a man as that.' Thesiger, with cordial assent, replied, 'No, nor so green.' I wonder whether his sons, who have got on in life much earlier than their far cleverer father, ever saw him in his robes: at least till he became Lord Chancellor. One of Follett's nearest relations told me that he never had seen Follett in his wig. And though he saw Follett perpetually, the single remark of Follett's that he could remember was that lawyers do not generally succeed in the House of Commons because they speak too well. But if Follett's kindred failed to appreciate him duly, there were those who did. Lord Ellenborough, Chief Justice of England, when asked in age what were the greatest pleasures in life, replied that the greatest he knew were a quiet game at whist, and to hear a young lawyer named Follett argue a point of law. And Helps told the writer, more than once, that it was one of his greatest enjoyments to hear Follett speak, no matter on what subject. But he died, being Attorney-General, at the age already named. Humbled to the earth, and below it, ought certain Attorney-Generals whom the writer has known to be when they think whose place they hold, but assuredly do not fill. What Curran meant by the words I do not

in any way know, save that he meant something depre-  
ciatory, when he declared that a certain speech was  
more like an Attorney-Particular than an Attorney-  
General. But, taking the phrase to mean something  
very bad, any one who has known the law for the last  
thirty years, has known several most awful Attorney-  
Particulars. Happily for them they were so awfully  
Particular, that they seemed quite pleased with them-  
selves. But the greatest Attorney-General died before  
being made Lord Chancellor. All his career is a  
fading memory in a number of men which is year by  
year lessening. And save a statue of white marble  
in the North aisle of the Nave of Westminster Abbey,  
there is nothing to show of Follett. No memoir of  
him was ever written: in any case none was ever  
published. Yet those who often saw and heard him  
will never forget him. My last remembrance of him  
is sitting on the bench which used to run along the  
side of Lincoln's Inn Hall, with his hands thrust  
very deeply into his pockets, with the black eyes  
gleaming out from under the white wig, listening with  
deep attention to a solicitor who was coaching him  
up for a Chancery case. For he went into the Court  
of Chancery sometimes, though mainly a common  
lawyer. In a minute more he was addressing Lord  
Lyndhurst, then Chancellor, having mastered his brief  
without reading it by the solicitor's help. And the  
keen pale face of the Chancellor was earnestly watch-  
ing the man in whom he knew he had met his match,  
and fancied he beheld his successor. It was a grievous  
thought, that Follett had sometimes to plead before  
decent old Lord Cottenham. That a man should  
be, in Lord Melbourne's words, 'the best of cooks'  
(the phrase is to be understood morally), may make  
him a pleasant colleague for an easy-going Premier  
thankful to be rid of Brougham: but is a poor

reason for putting him where (if he were strong enough) he would be the head of the English Law. But, as a curious fact, the Whigs have had to put up with very weak Chancellors, till they came to Bethell and Roundell Palmer. And both of these had been Tories. The names of Cottenham, Cranworth, and Hatherley, look very small and pale in the grand succession. Lord Campbell was one of the best of Chief Justices, but he became Chancellor at eighty. He was master of his work: but it was too late. And you could not rank him, as an equity lawyer, beside Lyndhurst and Cairns.

The successful advocate has his peerage to show: his fortune (which may be a large one, unless he has an extravagant and silly wife): his social place in the world, much uplifted in most cases from the level at which he began: his family of sons and daughters, expensively educated, started in life with the idea that they are to do nothing, and sometimes idiots to so inexpressible a degree that they are ashamed of the only thing they have to be proud of, that their father was a great lawyer. Even the kindly Sir Walter Scott was irritated for once when his eldest son, sent into a cavalry regiment to lead a life of amusement, wrote his father a letter in which he talked in contemptuous terms of *Edinburgh lawyers*. Let us hope that this was merely a transient phase in Sir Walter the second. It brought back a well-deserved reminder that he was himself the son of one Edinburgh lawyer and the grandson of another, and owed everything he had and was thereto: likewise a suggestion that, considering the premises, it was rather too much for him to talk with such airs. Besides these material traces of the successful lawyer's career, you have now and then his printed volumes. Of course Bacon is beyond speaking of. You have Brougham's unreadable pages,

very many: you have Campbell's volumes of pleasant gossiping history; you have Jeffrey's Essays, specimens for the most part of a school of criticism which has passed away. But Lyndhurst, Follett, Thesiger, Wilde, Scarlett, Bethell, are wholly silent. They said very much, but they wrote nothing at all. There is nothing to show. As for Lord Erskine, all that remains beyond the tradition of a marvellous eloquence is the speech written for him by Mr. Hookham Frere. In that striking oration he states that he was of noble, perhaps of royal blood: he had a house at Hampstead: he had been called many times during the past season to the country on special retainers, travelling generally in a post-chaise and four: and he was compassed with the infirmities of human nature. These assurances he repeated three times over, finally (we are informed) in a strain of *agonising eloquence*. Still, remarkable though the speech be, one would say that there must have been something about Erskine's oratory beyond what is here represented. Either that; or it must have been easier in his days to be a great orator than in these days of Gladstone and Bright.

7.8. All this is quite true: but just look at this beech hedge which bounds the lane along which our devious steps are slowly bearing us. They say the hedge is a hundred feet high. It looks it all. And it is the external limit of a fair domain whose name the Saxon tourist in these parts would not readily pronounce if he saw it written, and would vainly think to spell it if he heard it said. Through the great hedge blazes at this moment a sunset which makes half the horizon glorious beyond all remembrance of sunsets past. This milestone bears the legend *Perth II*. We are these miles North of what is sometimes called the

*Fair City* : and hard by is the beautiful Tay. Surely if Sir Walter has made the Tweed the river of Scotland for associations, the Tay abides the chief Scottish river for varied beauty. Deep purple against the Eastern sky stretches that range of hills. There is the round scalp of Dunsinane. And here is the roar of an express train tearing unseen over an iron bridge hidden among trees hard by. If Macbeth, from his height, had heard that sound, he would probably have concluded it was somebody coming for him. One has known folk whose antecedents would not bear examination frightened by as irrelevant a cause.

Let these discursive thoughts be concluded by the suggestion that a very uncomfortable view of the abiding resultant of a man's career in this life is gained when one thinks of the effect he may have left upon the character and career of some other people. A boyish recollection may here be permitted. In the writer's early youth a certain preacher, a Broad-Churchman coming before his day (or perhaps a High-Churchman), set forth in a rural parish certain advanced views which roused the disapproval of a local poet. The poet produced a composition in severe condemnation of the preacher's discourses, only four lines of which remain vividly in one's memory : startling in the sharpness and directness of the statement they contain, and indicating a simplicity of belief rarely met in these sophisticated days. Some apology is due for quoting them : but here they are. They speak concerning the preacher's parishioners, and suggest the character of the instruction provided for them :

The vile unsoundness of his public speech  
(Bourignian and Socinian) none can tell :  
Yet still they go to church and hear him preach,  
Not thinking that through him they'll go to Hell.

Something very grievous and abiding, doubtless (if true), as the result of quiet years in a quiet country parish. Let it be trusted that the declaration was as inaccurate as it was presumptuous. And let it be hoped that the inconspicuous upshot of the life of each reader of this page may be to make any who may remember him at all, somewhat truer, kinder, and more sympathetic.

(1882.)

## XV.

### OF PARTING COMPANY.

YOU have had your breakfast, and are now sitting down at your writing-table to begin the forenoon's work, when you are subjected to a brief interruption. A little boy of eight years, with a fat and rosy face, comes in ; and in a loud voice exclaims 'Good-bye !' He is going to school, where he must be at ten o'clock. According to daily wont, you hasten to the window, and see the little man set forth. He issues from the door, then looks round, and solemnly waves his hand. Then he turns his face to his own burden, which none can share. He has his own world, a heavy enough world for his little strength : he must face it alone. No mortal can share all his experiences. He is anxious, as you mark him trotting along till he is out of sight, how he is to get on at school that day ; not knowing (any more than ST. PAUL) ' how it may go with him.' Possibly he has got into some inconceivably little scrape, about which he would not on any account tell anybody : and he is burdened with the fear that things may never come right any more. Possibly he has had some small difference with a contemporary ; and is perplexing himself how the quarrel is to be made up, or continued and aggravated. The lesson of the day may weigh heavily : the difference between an adverb and a pre-

position appearing beyond human comprehension. You go back to your work,—which he knows nothing about ; and the little man goes his own way.

That is the beginning. Ah, the beginning was here, a good while earlier. As soon as an individual being begins consciously to be, the individual being begins to part company with all being besides : begins to go on alone. We may try to keep together in this life : some of us try to do so, hard : but it is vain. Our personality must needs separate us, separate us widely, from every other person. There are points, points in time, points in interest, at which we seem to touch others : we exchange thoughts, and in a measure each sees for the moment how the other fares, and feels. But in the larger part by far of the inward experience of every day, we are quite alone. Hard work, notably, is a very solitary thing : so is worry. And language, after all, is but a rude and imperfect instrument to convey the shades of human thought and feeling.

But it is not the condition of our being that is to be the subject of the present dissertation. We are not going to think of that, any more than we allow ourselves to think of a good many things. It is moral cowardice, doubtless, not to look things full in the face ; but then most thoughtful folk are moral cowards. The writer, notably. Intellectually and morally, a good deal of one's time is spent in looking the other way : if that may not be, then in shutting the eyes, resolutely. Our topic is the fashion in which, from very near the beginning, circumstances push those apart who would earnestly wish to keep together.

At this point it is inevitable that something be said as to the surroundings amid which these lines are written. For they are strange: and the writer, like some few of the human beings he knows, among

unfamiliar scenes is a different person. Many days hence (if such days are given) this hour and that prospect will come vividly back; and the lonely feeling of the place and time. For, having sadly parted company to-day, after ten days together, with a friend whose face may not be seen again for long, he has come as a solitary pilgrim to this beautiful spot among the green fields and trees of Hertfordshire. There, in full view, the little red city nestles to-day in the suddenly spread foliage of the thirtieth of May. And here, having walked down the green slope, crossed the little river Ver, and passed by or through the vanished Verulam (taking a memorial flint-stone from the ruined Roman wall), I stand in a quiet lane; and am amazed to find myself here. On the opposite slope, across the narrow wooded valley, stretches the vast length of the great church of St. Albans: ancient church but new cathedral. The central tower shows plainly its strange material: the Roman bricks, so thin that one would rather call them tiles, which are serving a second use. From the older dwellings of Verulam, built by Roman hands, the materials were taken; carried across the Ver to the northern slope: and piled up, eight hundred years since, into that severe but magnificent structure, second in length among mediæval churches that abide: Winchester, which is first, transcending, with its 555 feet and 8 inches, St. Albans by just seven feet. The flat tiles were leisurely laid: the walls all round rose but seven feet in each year of the time of building: the superabundant mortar had time to harden before it was severely compressed: and the upshot was, that in the walls of the nave it is calculated there is as much mortar as there is of tiles. But mortar, even of the faithfully-working Middle Ages, is not as stone: not even as Roman

tiles, second-hand : and that wall which stretches its inordinate length away to the left of that red tower, striated with horizontal lines, was till lately two feet off the perpendicular. But the strength and skill of the nineteenth century pulled it right ; and these great buttresses will doubtless hold it right for some centuries to come. Over the great church and the red city stretches, this afternoon, the blue sky, with many fleecy clouds slowly drifting towards the north-west : for (though you would not think it) there is an easterly wind. The trees wear their first wonderful green : the leaves, delaying long, have come quickly at last ; and the apple-trees are glorified with blossoms. And so here they are in actual presence : Verulam, and St. Albans, and the grand abbey church : all set in the greenest of verdure, all spread under the bluest of May skies. One has thought of Bacon, to whom popular consent has given a title which never came from the recognised source of such distinction. What is the use of talking of Lord Verulam, and informing your fellow-creatures that never on this earth there lived such a man as Lord Bacon ? You would merely be set down as a pedant, over-accurate : or even as one who, knowing extremely little, desires to make parade of the little you know. One has thought, too, of Dickens and *Bleak House* : for that quiet city is the very place which poor Jo named as *Stolbuns*. Here dwelt the brick-makers, and to this scene, so different in the wild winter night and day, came Lady Dedlock on her last awful walk. Persons lacking in culture inhabit these parts still : for of three individuals whom the writer asked the way to the cathedral, one had never heard of any such thing, and the other two directed him wrong. It is conceivable, indeed, that the English language, as spoken by him, was not easily understood of

English ears. The little hostelry, too, by the Ver, and hard by a narrow stream quite covered with water-cresses, bearing the name of *The Fighting Cocks*, preserves the memory of a form of diversion not much approved at any season by cultured souls. But with this glittering green of the earth, and the sapphire sky above, which seemed impossible of return through that black and awful winter, St. Albans and its environing fields and woods look now the ideal of peaceful beauty. I knew the church well, though it was seen but once before, and then cursorily at the rate of fifty miles an hour: but what one wants now is to drink in its aspect and feel that one is here. For I am not likely ever to be in this place again; and far different scenes will be around one to-morrow.

All things are strange, even to the names above the shop-doors. You can hardly walk along a street in an English town without seeing some name you never saw nor heard of before.

Time goes fast here. I had three hours, but they are nearly gone. Nothing shall be said of the church on this page. That may be again. Through this little gate: into this green wood: by the wall of Verulam, ruined and ivy-grown: over the bridge: past *The Fighting Cocks*: up the green swell of grassy field to the Cathedral: by blossoming apple-tree and great yew: so to the Midland station; and back to ordinary life again.

Some may regard all this as a digression from the severity of the argument. Possibly they are right.

The little boy of eight comes back at one o'clock, and tells you, as fully as he can, all that has befallen him since you parted. It is but the beginning of a deeper separation that you have here. His brothers,

who are older, go out for the long day, and you and they have already begun to go your several ways. And further on, when the children are growing into young men and young women, even though you do all you can to retain their confidence, and though you listen with unfeigned interest to all they tell you about their concerns and companions, still their life has in great measure parted company with yours, and you would do no better than weary them by trying to keep the old way. You strive vainly with the estranging power of time, and with the isolation that comes of being an individual being. You know mainly all your little boy is thinking of, unless you be a selfish brute ; all that he is afraid of and anxious about. But the rift soon comes, and it will grow into a wide separation. The young nature is transparent at the first, and you see through it. But the water, shallow and transparent at its rise, deepens fast and darkens ; and you cannot see through it any more. And when the sad and perplexing day comes, that the hopeful lad must leave you for some distant place which you will never see, you know that though he is sorry to leave you, he would be still more sorry to stay with you ; and you discover that the manifest intention of Providence is, that human beings should stand each on his own feet and go each his separate way. In earlier days one could not imagine how the aging parents managed to live at all, with their children scattered over the wide world. When a man, returning from India, told you it was ten years since he saw his children last, you gazed at him with wonder, and with a pity which you subsequently discovered to have been needless. The parting had been bitter at the first, but it is the rule that people shall get over things. The facts are stated, truly and beautifully, by Philip van Artevelde :

Pain and grief  
Are transitory things, no less than joy :  
And though they leave us not the men we were,  
Yet they do leave us.

But that the trial is in contemplation rather than in fact, makes it all the sadder to look forward to. To be told, when you were a little fellow, heart-broken at going away from home for a year, that when you were grown up you would not care a bit though you never saw your brothers and sisters at all, would be no comfort whatsoever. Just the reverse. Let us be knocked on the head at once, if *that* be what we shall come to if we live. There is a pleasant rural place, not unknown to fame, where the writer abode when he was a little boy : only green fields and trees, red rocks and a little river. If any mortal had told him, in those days, that the time would come when through years he would never see that place and never miss it, it would have been a sharp pang. Now he is in a measure content, though it has been visited just once in the last twenty-five years : half a lifetime : nearly a whole working lifetime. And there are few things which more infuriate one, than when a hard-headed mortal, with no heart whatever, but with a good deal of worldly experience, expresses his calm conviction of the instability of human purposes and the evanescence of human feeling. I have heard, long ago, a grim being, with high cheek-bones and a frost-bitten complexion, speaking in that fearful tone which indicates origin in Aberdeenshire and the idiosyncrasy concomitant, say of a poor crushed creature whose young wife had died, 'Ah, don't let him say he won't marry a third.' Except, indeed, attendance at a Scotch *Church Court*, I know nothing more irritating than the like hard sayings ; which are all the harder that they have many times proved to be quite true.

My friend Smith told me that on a beautiful autumn day he was in a great and confusing railway station at the entrance of the Highlands, which at that season is for certain hours of the day a place of unspeakable hubbub and crowding. For whether you are making for Inverness-shire heather or for Aberdeenshire birches, it is very nearly inevitable that you pass through that lengthy and gusty shed. Stolid are the servants, and too few: the piles of luggage and the boxes of grouse are dreadful. Though you must needs wait there for many minutes, the wise man will not come forth from his carriage if it be in any way possible to abide in it. There, seated alone in a carriage which had come from beside the bleak North Sea and was making for awful London, Smith found an old gentleman he knew. One sees the quiet, sharp, cynical face: the world knew well how very keen and trenchant the nearest to him in blood could be. My friend talked with him till the train went: the thing which most impressed him was how entirely alone that old man had come to be. His wife was dead: and his great household of boys and girls were scattered far and wide: all grown up, each in his own home or hers. He could not have told you the names of his grandchildren: he had no idea earthly what sons or daughters were thinking of or doing on that day. One was an eminent author; but the old man never read his books. The old man was cynically cheerful: he had quite parted company with the faces and the interests of former years: he did not really care a bit for anybody but himself. He had run about on the grass on summer mornings with the merry little boys and girls, forty years ago: but that was all gone by. The stern-faced moustached sons, and the clever worldly middle-aged women, who were in fact his children, were not the little boys and girls at all. He had no children:

these had ceased to be, unless in form of law. The rift that began when the lad of eight years came to say good-bye, going to school, had grown into a severance broader than the broad Atlantic. You will be startled, some day, my reader, to find yourself coming to be as the old gentleman was : to find yourself going about quite cheerfully though your boys are far away, though you have seen your wife die. You would not have believed it once.

But there is more to say. Let me address myself to men and women whose years are approaching fifty, and who married early in their career. Such know a touching but inevitable form of parting company. Let me ask them, Where are the children? Where are the little fairies that ran about your home, these short years ago? I do not mean that they are dead: not even that they are scattered: only that they are changed. You always knew, even from the first, that the charm of childhood must needs go: you often thought to yourself, looking at the little faces and listening to the merry voices, that you wished nobody would ever grow older. For something would be lost, which not even the growing intelligence of early manhood and womanhood would quite repay. They are all you could wish, your boys and girls: and you are thankful: I will not suppose the occasional black sheep, nor the cantankerous unmanageable fool; for unless there were somewhat of that same in yourself, it will not be. But I say, Where are the children: the solemn eyes that scanned your face so earnestly when some question was put touching the nature of our being here, whose answer only God knows: the little dog that came in, barking as no ordinary dog ever did, when you were very busy, but whom you could not possibly send away: the young looker-on into the Future who sat upon your knee, and eagerly

told you many things which were pictured as sure to happen, which you know now were in fact never to be? These are gone, utterly and for ever. If they had died, they would have abode in memory the same little beings for ever: years would not have changed them: and you would have cherished the firm belief that when you found them again, where we hope to find every one, you would find them the very same, little children waiting to welcome you as of old. There is no death so complete, as the death which comes through continuing life: there is nothing you lose so utterly as what you keep: here. The little one that gradually died into the grown-up man or woman, is dead irrevocably and for evermore. If I had ever attached any importance whatever to the argument (so-called) for a Future Life, which founds on the transparent delusion that anything you miss very much you are sure to get back again, and that anything you don't see how you are to do without will in fact be given to you, I confess I should be frightened sorely by this which has just been said. For it has never been suggested that in a better world you will find your friend more in number than one individual being: not even that you will be allowed to fix on the stage in your friend's development at which you would like to arrest him and keep him evermore the same. No one supposes that even there you can have your children as both old and young: the often-remembered looks and sayings of their earliest youth are gone away eternally. There are many such that sometimes bring the tears to your eyes: but unless there came the revolution of the great Platonic year, you are always leaving them further behind you. And you must just learn to do without them. If these dear things are never to come back, wherefore any? It is quite manifest that the fact

that we should be unutterably glad to have again some prized thing departed, is no warrant earthly that it is to return.

It touches one to see even very homely manifestations of the fashion in which men manage to live, who have parted company with most people and most things they valued. In these hard and dry days, much is made of sober satisfactions. 'I like to see anything right ; it lightens the mind, Doctor.' Such were the very words once said to my friend Smith. There was the sad worn old face : the speaker's wife was long dead, and his children mostly scattered : the frailties of age were gathering fast : in fact, he was pretty well broken-hearted. To see little things about his house and his garden right was the only enjoyment that remained. And that was hardly enjoyment : it did but lift the burden a little. 'It lightens the mind.' And the statement was made in a quiet sorrowful voice.

There are few things more touching to one with some little discernment, than the fashion in which many human beings try to smile at grave facts. 'Were not my heart light, I wad die,' wrote Lady Grizel Baillie ; and said the broken-spirited Robert Burns : there is no heavier heart than the one which affects that unreal lightness. It is as when poor Anne Boleyn the evening before her execution jested about her little neck. Even so, one has seen those who tried to talk cheerfully, not to say comically, about the great wrench of parting. One of the most successful attempts to put such a thing amusingly may be found in one of the earlier stories of Mr. Anthony Trollope. He relates how a kind-hearted but philosophic Frenchman, aware of the necessity of submission to the inevitable, and desirous to express his sorrow and his submission at once to certain friends

whose departure was imminent, devised the following line of idiomatic English to convey his mingled feelings :—

Are you go ? Is you gone ? And I left ? Verra vell !

You may try, kindly reader, the next time the necessity occurs, whether that kind of thing will much help you. When the railway train is sweeping you away in one direction, and the great steamship bearing your brother in the other, who parted two hours since and may not meet any more in this world, you may lean back and close your eyes and think of the poor Frenchman's pathetic line, and aim at his judicious resignation. *Verra vell !* I fear you will find the thing will not do. Like many other helps here provided, it may look like something real in days when it is not wanted, but it will collapse into utter emptiness when it is needed. A document which is possibly the earliest written that survives makes mention of *miserable comforters*. And the latest experience of human hearts is not unlikely to resemble the first recorded.

A homely expression of solemn facts does not make them less solemn : rather more. When it comes home to one's self, we cannot bear anything high-flown. The simplest words are the only ones that seem real. An anxious wife said to her husband, who had been ill for a very few days, and who (speaking as one with special knowledge) had conveyed that the danger was greater than she thought, 'But you don't mean that you may have to leave me ?' There was a moment's pause : and the answer came, 'It's on the cards.' It was more. It was to be, and that very soon. You cannot allow yourself to say out what you are thinking and feeling. A little since, I saw two lads, each of twenty-one, who had been more than brothers

since each was five years old, part for at least many years. 'Good-bye, old fellow,' were the last words. They could not begin to talk sentimentally in the bustle of the railway station, when the finest train which runs in this world was about to go. And I knew well that they had not done it at all. It was when Mr. Crummles was parting from Nicholas Nickleby, caring very little about it, that he strained the recalcitrant Nicholas to his heart, on the street, as the coach was starting, and exclaimed, 'Farewell, my noble, my lion-hearted boy!' But when, afterwards, the parting came which was indeed a trial, things were changed. 'Not a jot of his theatrical manner remained: he put out his hand with an air which, if he could have summoned it at will, would have made him the best actor of his day in homely parts.' We remember, vividly, the time and place of parting: but we make no use of the word 'Farewell,' and we speak of these things to no one. Happily, we do not take in that the one who goes is to be so long away: that a year will go over, and another year: and the bright face will never be seen, the familiar step never heard, the pleasant presence gone out of our daily life, and from the dwelling and the ways we know. Yet you will understand something of the meaning of the lines which say, 'Twas strange that such a little thing Should leave a blank so large,' or, as the man said in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* when Eva died, 'The world is as empty as an egg-shell.'

The separation is wide which is made by culture. One sees it, when the toiling parents in Scotland have pinched themselves for years to send their boy to a University: not realising the estrangement which is sure to follow the success of their toils and schemes. There need be no severance in affection: but the

highly-educated lad with his degree in honours has found access into a world of thought which to the cottager and his thrifty wife is not at all. Just yesterday, I received a letter from an unknown friend in British Columbia, telling how, some fifty years ago, he and a little brother were sent from Perth to Glasgow by the coach. The sixty miles take two hours now, but then it was a long journey. The guard of the stage-coach was a swart, broad-faced, ruddy man : he was kind to the two boys, and told them that he had a laddie of his ain, who was a gude scholar. The guard's language was a very moderate expression of the fact. For his son was James Halley, who was out of sight the best scholar of his time in the University of Glasgow : a pale, freckled, gentle lad, whose mother eked out the good guard's income by keeping a little shop in the High Street, hard by the College where her son was *facile princeps* : the second to him, but with a considerable space between, was a lad then known as Archy Tait, now well known by a different designation.\* One sees the decent trustworthy guard going out for his long day's journey, in all kinds of weather : helping luggage up and down : saying a cheering word to lonely boy travellers : sitting with the honest sensible Scotch face screwed up in the north wind : and the pale student lad going into his classes, and toiling in his little room at home : the most lovable of sons as well as the most brilliant of scholars : writing Greek Iambics as one man in a generation does : living in a world of thought unknown on the Perth coach or in the little shop in the High Street. One pictures the guard coming home in the winter evening and asking how Jamie (so they called him) had got through the day : and Jamie telling him how grandly Sir Daniel had read a bit

\* As Archbishop of Canterbury.

of Æschylus that afternoon : likewise that there had been *no misfortunes*. In such words was a little boy known to the writer wont to relate that no punishment had befallen him at school. And some analogous expression would convey to the proud old Halley that Jamie's Greek verses for that day had not been surpassed or equalled by those of the laborious Archy Tait. Still, here parents and child were not so far asunder. It was not as when the old working man John McLiver went on earning his eighteenpence a day when his son was F.M. Lord Clyde. The Field Marshal bought his father a cottage, and sent him an occasional bank-note through the parish minister : but he did not come to see him. It was nobody's fault : but it was sad all the same.

Thus we part company.

(1882.)

## XVI.

### LORD CAMPBELL.\*

NORTH of the Tweed,—and in some places south of the Tweed, too,—it has for many years been a commonplace with those who preach Self-Help, or who discuss the phenomena and the philosophy of Getting On, to point to the career of Lord Campbell. By extraordinary industry: by rigorous self-denial: by steadfastly keeping his end in view: by great ability no doubt and great learning: all seconded by wonderful good luck; the St. Andrews student of Divinity, the son of good old Dr. Campbell, parish minister of Cupar, who had no great connections and no powerful friends to back him; was Solicitor-General at the age of fifty-three; Attorney-General at fifty-four; was raised to the Bench as Lord Chief Justice of England; and finally became Lord Chancellor of Great Britain. Nor is it enough to say he held these great places: no one can deny that he proved himself equal to the duties of each. He was a strong Attorney-General. He was one of the most eminent of Chief Justices. And though raised to the Woolsack at four-score, he was a thoroughly sufficient Chancellor.

This Biography must enlist sympathy: the reader

\* *Life of John, Lord Campbell, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, consisting of a selection from his Autobiography, Diary, and Letters.* Edited by his Daughter, the Hon. Mrs. Hardcastle. In two volumes. London: 1881.

cannot but rejoice in each step of Campbell's success. It lets us in, with remarkable frankness: and the more we see of Campbell, the better we like him. It is a story of toil and self-denial, of luck and disappointment: the young barrister sometimes 'nearly broken-hearted,' convinced that he has 'no talents for this profession'; yet in a little plucking up heart again, and writing that his 'patience and perseverance are unconquerable.' When prosperity came, wonderfully soon, and very steadily, he enjoyed it simply and showed he did, as a more secretive man would not have done. Others are not so outspoken. That is their way; and by all means let them take it. But Campbell's frankness enlists us on his side. And there is really nothing to conceal: all is pleasing and lovable. We share the joy of the aged minister of Cupar, sadly mortified when John turned away from the ministry of the Scottish Church, and slow to believe that his son was really rising at the English Bar, yet at last assured of his growing eminence. It was a great fact, and unmistakable, when Dr. Campbell's two sons drove him through Cupar streets, crowded on a market-day, in a carriage and four, amid a popular ovation. You may smile at Campbell's unsophisticated enjoyment of such things; but you are drawn to the right-hearted and sweet-natured man. It is no wonder that, in youth and in age, he was, in his daughter's words, 'beloved by all who belonged to him.'

Let us say at once of the daughter who has prepared this Biography, 'my beloved child and best of friends, Mary,' that she has done her work admirably well. The two volumes consist exclusively of her father's words. The materials from which she had to draw were an Autobiography, a Diary, and a series of letters to his father and his brother. Whoever reads these letters without being touched must

have either a wrong head or a bad heart. Mrs. Hardcastle has given the world an abiding memorial of the father whose life she brightened ; showing him truthfully, though doubtless at his best. And this is her sufficient reward.

She has set her father right with all readers whose judgment she would value. And it was well this should be done. For it is to be confessed, and it is a most singular instance of the capricious nature of public opinion, that Lord Campbell's merits met but a grudging recognition through the greater part of his career. Here is a man of blameless life, of great ability and industry, of perfect truth and honour, of much kindness and goodness of heart : yet he was grudgingly spoken of by many, and bitterly abused by two or three, of whom Miss Martineau is a specially spiteful specimen. We do not here allude to her malignant misrepresentations of fact in the matter of Campbell's elevation to the Chief-Justiceship. Of that matter we shall speak in its proper place. We speak of her general tone of virulent depreciation. Nor do we meanwhile refer to Brougham, by necessity of his nature hating every man who met any success or who did anything well ; and absolutely unrestrained by truth either in puffing himself or in running down any other. Neither have we in our mind the briefless barrister, possibly stopped in some foolish speech, and vilifying the Chief Justice anonymously in a newspaper. Apart from all personal offence, it is quite certain that Lord Campbell exerted a real power of provocation upon some people. It made them angry, to think of him and his success and his self-complacency. And it fell to Campbell to be spoken and written of by several men who could not think of any one placed as he was unless with a latent comparison with themselves : a comparison which was irrita-

tive. He was well-behaved ; which is an injury to some, and would be felt as a rebuke by certain ex-Chancellors. He was competently rich, and paid his bills : a great offence to some departed lawyers of high position. Wealth and respectability, in another, are doubtless a provocation to some human beings. Then, it is to be admitted, there was a certain tendency when on the Bench to what may be called Clap-trap : as in *Thank God, we have no Inquisition in England*. There were jokes : as when the Chief Justice remarked of some poor fellows drowned by the bursting of one of Barclay and Perkins' vats, that they ' floated on their watery bier.' And it was Lord Campbell all over, to start up in church at an assize service when the clergyman began to read the prayer for Parliament, and interrupt him with the assurance that Parliament was not sitting, the Chief Justice himself having been one of the Commissioners who prorogued it the evening before. Such things were provocative to some people. The writer was present when Lord Campbell was asked whether the last-named proceeding did not amount to *brawling in church*. With the greatest good-nature he replied that probably it had better not have been done, but that he really could not help correcting a manifest blunder. Beyond all question, it had better not have been done. We have all witnessed mistakes in public worship : and the rule is that they be ignored at the time and forgotten ever after. But we are mistaken, if such as read these volumes will be much disposed to look for the spots on the sun. Surely any little failings or weaknesses were balanced, a thousand times over, by noble and most lovable qualities. One cannot even remember them, thinking of such a character and career : seeing the true man shown to us so fully and simply : the shrewd Scotsman keeping an unsophisticated heart to the last : thinking his wife

and children paragons, and his father and brother, and beloved in return as few have been: rejoicing, when made Chief Justice of England, that now he could provide for the faithful clerk who came as a lad to the poor young barrister and stayed with him through disappointment and success, and shared his rise: fairly and bravely earning all his great elevation: waiting for it long and patiently: and enjoying it heartily when it came at last.

There is no more striking instance of the capricious fashion in which things befall, than the way in which the nickname of *Plain John* stuck to Lord Campbell. It seems to have soothed Brougham some little under his own dismal failure and isolation, to call Campbell *Plain John*, and *Jack Campbell*; as also to call Macaulay *Tom*. If it please any one to behold the littleness of the great, let him turn to the published correspondence of Mr. Macvey Napier. The bitterest enemy Brougham ever had (and he made many) never could have shown him up as he has there exhibited himself. Macaulay would not stand it: 'That man is possessed by the Devil,'—'That man *is* the Devil,' was his outspoken estimate. Miss Martineau's venomous little hit at Lord Campbell *and his wife* is worth recalling:—

In my earlier days Lord Campbell was 'Plain John Campbell': but plain John was wonderfully like the present Lord: facetious, in and out of place, politic, flattering to an insulting degree, and prone to moralising in so trite a way as to be almost as insulting. He was full of knowledge, and might have been inexhaustibly entertaining if he could have forgotten his prudence and been natural. When his wife, Lady Stratheden, was present, there was some explanation both of the worldly prudence and the behaviour to ladies,—as if they were spoiled children,—which plain John supposed would please them.\*

'The public heard less, and his own friends heard less, in the latter part of his life about his plainness

\* *Autobiography*, vol. i. p. 338.

and humility, and the paternal manse: but he had exhibited these things so often in his electioneering speeches and his official addresses that he was best known as plain John Campbell to the last.\*

The misrepresentation of words once said by Lord Campbell is remarkable, and persistent. Lord Campbell never talked of his plainness and humility, in the sense in which Miss Martineau continually uses the phrase. He was the last man to do so. 'Born in the manse, we have each the patent of Nobility;' were his words at a gathering of Sons of the Scotch Clergy in London, which he and Sir David Wilkie attended. The circumstances were the simplest possible. He had sat in Parliament as member for Edinburgh for several years, being Attorney-General. A change of Ministry came: he went out of office; and there was a General Election. Addressing his constituents, he said that when last he appeared before them he had held the place of His Majesty's Attorney-General, and was official Head of the English Bar: Now, he was stripped of that, and appeared before them as plain John Campbell. A more natural and innocent speech, one would say, could hardly be. And one would say there must have been few loopholes of attack, when this was made so much of and so persistently harped upon.

Whoever knew Lord Campbell knew well that his references to his father's house and his student days were not made in that peculiar humbleness which we associate with the character of Uriah Heep. The two brothers, George and John, retrieved the worldly fortunes of the family. But the father, Doctor Campbell of Cupar, though his living was but £80 a year,

\* *Biographical Sketches*, p. 246. Miss Martineau's account of Lord Campbell in this volume is a tissue of ill-set misrepresentation.

was of good descent: his circumstances soon grew adequate to his position; and the dignity of the old clergyman's look and manner is remembered yet. The Chancellor came of gentle blood, through each parent. It is now made matter of complaint by some critics that he was unduly proud of his descent. Possibly it is wrong to be proud of gentle blood, or of anything else. But in telling the story of one's birth, it seems natural to state facts. And the accusations of over-pride and of over-humility cannot both be true.

If we knew as much about any Chancellor, or any tutor who becomes a Bishop, or any mortal who wins one of the great prizes of life, as we know about Lord Campbell, we should, doubtless, feel the like interest in him. But, in fact, we are not commonly permitted to get behind the scenes with the winners in the lottery of life, as we are permitted here. And, not to all readers, but assuredly to some, there is about Lord Campbell a singular combination of circumstances of special interest, hardly ever combined. Homely Fife: dear and sacred St. Andrews, University and Links, gray ruins and green ivy and broad sea, and remembrances innumerable, grave and gay, national, and extremely individual: likewise the sternly Tory Church of Scotland, republican by constitution, High-Church (till these last years) by practice if ever High-Churchism were; believing in the House of Peers, likewise in the goodness of George IV. and the wisdom of William IV.; these things go kindly together, and have gone together for ages. But these things in combination with Westminster Hall and the Courts of Guildhall, with the Temple and Lincoln's Inn, with the drawing of Pleadings and the fees inscribed on the back of Briefs, with the bullying of Ellenborough and the ever-ready tears of Eldon, with the Procession at the beginning of Term and the Taking of Silk: how

many are there in each generation who are equally familiar with the Scotch Kirk and the English Law? Is there more than one member of an Inn of Court who is in the orders of the Northern Ecclesiastical Establishment? And if there were more, how would they like it? What would they think, in the latter years, of the enthusiastic choice of youth? How many students of Divinity, 'having delivered all their discourses,' have passed from the quaint quadrangle of the College of the Blessed Mary, with its beautiful hawthorn-tree planted by another Mary, a hapless Queen whose career was anything but blessed, —to the highest place on the Judgment-seat of the Common Law, to the crowning glory of the Woolsack at last? Not without a sympathetic smile, not without something like a tear, can some who have watched successive generations of Divinity students, with the profound sympathy that comes of having been such themselves, find the Attorney-General recording that he never was so frightened as he was when he first made an important speech in the House of Commons, since the day when he had to conduct public prayer (according to his own device) in the Hall of St. Mary's College at St. Andrews: on which memorable occasion he heard the clock strike the awful hour of eight, and 'his heart died within him.' And though the *Lives of the Chancellors* proved a most popular work, and Sir John Campbell's *Speeches* secured (in spite of Brougham's protest) a kindly notice in the *Edinburgh Review*, it would be hardly less interesting to many to consider the theological thought and style of the first sermon which 'gained no small credit when read aloud before the Professors and Students,' being from the text 'All living things wait upon Thee, and Thou providest food for them in due season.' One sentence in this sermon was supplied

by a friend: 'Every leaf bears insects which quaff the delicious juices spontaneously supplied for their use, and spend their days in luxurious idleness.' And a reflection, entirely original, which was 'much applauded' by the Professor of those days, though we somehow doubt whether it would meet so favourable a reception now, was that 'we ought to be thankful that man is not, as he might have been, fed like an oyster, unconscious of his nutrition,' but is made capable of enjoying his dinner. One thing is certain: that in the eyes of a brother Scot, the Lord Chancellor, presiding in the House of Lords in his full-bottomed wig and his robes, never in any degree lost something of the look of a St. Andrews Student of Divinity. He was notably Scots, and Scots Church, to the last. It is vain for a Scotsman to think to conceal his nationality from another Scotsman. 'Ou aye,' said a humble mechanic to a lady who asked of him if the new minister did not speak very prettily: 'Ou aye; ye wad think at the first that he cam' frae Oxford or Cambridge. But he hasna gaen on long, till ye see he comes frae Paisley.'

John Campbell was born at Cupar on September 15, 1779. Cupar is the county town of the important shire of Fife; not uncommonly called *The Kingdom of Fife*. As with other Scotch names, the pronunciation of the name of Cupar puzzled London folk. Campbell tells us that in London some called it *Cupper*, and some *Kew-par*. In fact, it is called *Cooper*. There were two brothers, of whom John was the younger: and five sisters. Doctor Campbell succeeded, after John's birth, to the larger of the two livings of the parish: Cupar being (as many know) what in Scotland is called a *Collegiate Charge*: which means a parish church with two Incumbents, who in most cases quarrel. Cupar is eight miles distant from St.

Andrews: Here is one of John Campbell's earliest recollections:

'I remember my extreme delight when as a child I first visited the City of St. Andrews, and, being led down the "Butts Wynd" to the "Scores," the ocean in a storm was pointed out to me.'

In November 1790, at the age of eleven, John (his brother George came likewise) was entered as a student of the University of St. Andrews. The early age at which students of that period came to the University in Scotland has been many times explained. The Professors did the work of school-masters. The average age of entrants at the Scotch Universities is now eighteen. The brothers had each a Bursary, or Scholarship: one was £20 a year, the other £10. A faithful servant, who died in the family after forty years in it, took care of the little boys. The Professors of St. Andrews in that day were for the most part men of eminence: though probably less so than their successors at the present hour. Then, as now, the number of students was comparatively small. This session,\* there are fewer than two hundred. For four centuries the number has hardly varied. Great good follows in divers ways: notably in the greater attention which a Professor can devote to the training of individual students than is possible elsewhere. Not but that there is something inspiriting, both to students and Professor, in the crowded lecture-rooms of Glasgow: though how any Professor, able and genial as he may be, can teach seven hundred young men Latin daily is hard to discover. The physical advantages of the lesser University City are manifold. On many calm winter days, when a worse than London fog dulls the energies of Glasgow men, the happier students of St.

Andrews live in the brightest sunshine, under a sky of Italian blue. And to some human beings it is a feature in their life to abide within sight and sound of the sea. 'Grand place, St. Andrews,' said Carlyle to the writer on an afternoon in last May: 'you have the essence of all the antiquity of Scotland, in good and clean condition.'

In their second year, the two Campbells had rooms in St. Salvator's College: the fashion of residence within the College walls is now unhappily unknown in Scotland. It survived at St. Andrews longest. The brothers dined at an ordinary where an abundant dinner was provided at sixpence a-head. Fish, meat, and poultry in those days cost next to nothing. The students lived a temperate life, diversified by an occasional *Booze*: a harmless festival which 'has a favourable tendency to excite the faculties, to warm the affections, to improve the manners, and to form the character of youth.' In these latter days, such a festival bears the classic title of a *Gaudeamus*. The Chief Justice, student-like, records with manifest enjoyment the tricks occasionally played on Professors: which must endure till there are no more Universities. And he tells for himself, what has been many times told of him, how the *Αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν* on the wall of the University Library made a deep impression on him when first seen. 'I have always since *done my best*, and I have never been accused, or long accused myself, of idleness or apathy.'

In the spring of 1793 the children at Cupar Manse lost their mother:

I remember my brother and myself being sent for from St. Andrews to see her, and my anguish at beholding her altered looks, though I was not fully aware of her danger. In taking leave when we were about to return to St. Andrews, she must have known, though we did not, that she was to see us no more. We were made to kneel

at her bedside. She kissed and blessed us: and the last words I ever heard her pronounce now vibrate on my ear: 'Farewell! and oh! be good.'

She was an inestimable woman, and she was never forgotten by her children. Few will read, unaffected, the warm tribute to her virtues which the world-worn lawyer writes concerning the mother the little boy lost.

In due time, John Campbell proceeded to St. Mary's College, to study for the Church, being only sixteen. He had been a puny lad, and had gone by the derisive sobriquet of *Joannes Gigas, Jack the Giant*: but he now suddenly shot up to 'the respectable height of five feet ten inches.' Here Chalmers was a fellow-student: but gave no promise whatever of his future distinction. Campbell prosecuted his theological studies with diligence, and had hope of a presentation to the bleak parish of Cameron, a few miles south of St. Andrews. But that was not to be.

In 1798, a wealthy London merchant, Webster by name, applied to certain St. Andrews Professors for a tutor to his son: and John Campbell was appointed. After a tender parting from his father and sisters, and a few days at Edinburgh with his brother George, who was now studying medicine there, he travelled from Edinburgh to London by coach in three days and two nights. Much fear existed as to the effect upon the brain of the traveller of such excessive speed. The four hundred miles are now traversed in nine hours: and the brain of such as make the journey is neither better nor worse. York Minster came up to all he had heard of the glories of St. Andrews Cathedral before the days of Knox. The noise of London was stunning. The family to which he went lived at Clapham, and he was kindly treated: but the work was not congenial. He went to the

theatre, and was duly impressed by Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble: but 'the most memorable day of his life' was that on which he first went to the House of Commons. There was a great debate upon Slavery. And after hearing Wilberforce, Fox, and Pitt, he felt that he 'could no longer have been satisfied with being Moderator of the General Assembly.' Yet application was made for the rural parish of Legerwood, the living of which he would soon be qualified to hold. The application failed. Campbell wrote to his father :

My opinion of myself becomes lower and lower every day. I have no longer the most distant hope of ever composing with elegance, or of making any figure in the literary world. I can only wish for some retreat where I might employ myself in writing sermons and fattening pigs, where I might live and die unknown.

And to his brother :

My ambition now is to find some secure retreat, where, forgetting and forgotten, I may spend the *curriculum v.tæ cælo datum* in gloomy peace and desperate contentment. I have some thoughts of setting out in search of such a retreat, 'where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around': but if you can procure me a living in the Kirk of Scotland, you will save me the trouble of crossing the Atlantic.

These feelings were transient: and gradually John begins to write to his father as to giving up the Church for the Law. It was a great grief to the good old clergyman: as in another case the reversal of the process was to another, equally good and kind :

Some people could be extremely happy with a country kirk in Scotland. I am no longer of the number,—not from any dislike to obscurity, but from a horror of inaction. When I am employed, I am happy. When I am idle, I am miserable. Now, I never exert myself without absolute necessity, and I find no pleasure in feeding pigs or in shelling peas. As a country minister, therefore, I should be the most miserable of human beings, and not improbably should at last become completely deranged. As a reporter, and afterwards

as a lawyer, I shall be obliged to be busy every hour of the day, and shall have no time to indulge in gloomy and distressing reflections. In Scotland I should be nearly cut off from the streams of Helicon : in London I have only to kneel down and drink my fill. I shall pass my life in the centre of the republic of letters, and by unwearyed assiduity may perhaps obtain some of its honours.

The die was cast. The father reluctantly consented. Robert Spankie, a clever St. Andrews student, afterwards a serjeant-at-law and M.P., was editor of the *Morning Chronicle* : and offered Campbell an engagement which would be compatible with the study of the Law. Campbell began to attend the Courts : and having heard some great lawyers speak, he thought (as others have done) that it need not be very difficult to do as well, at least. Still the hopeful lad hesitates. He writes to his father (wanting some months of twenty-one) :

When I am in bad spirits, and sitting alone in my gloomy garret, I contemplate with pleasure the idea of being licensed and procuring a settlement in the Church. I spurn it when I hear the eloquent addresses of Law, of Gibbs, of Erskine ; and, while my heart burns within me, a secret voice assures me that if I make the attempt, I shall be as great as they.

To his sister, a few weeks later :

Although I am friendless at present, I am not sure that it ought to be assumed that I shall be without friends six years hence. During that long period surely some opportunity will occur of forming desirable connections, and every opportunity I shall sedulously improve. In about six years after I am called to the Bar, I expect to have distinguished myself so much as to be in possession of a silk gown and a seat in Parliament. I shall not have been long in the House of Commons before I interest the Minister in my favour and am made Solicitor-General. The steps then, though high, are easy : and after being a short time Attorney-General and Master of the Rolls, I shall get the seals, with the title of Earl Auld-Kirk-Yaird. I am sorry that this last sentence has escaped me, as it is the only one that did not come from the bottom of my heart.

He visited Cupar in the summer of 1800 ; and

was entered of Lincoln's Inn on November 3 in that year. He lived by his newspaper work: reporting parliamentary reports excellently though not writing shorthand: acting as theatrical critic: and contributing comic paragraphs which anticipated *Punch* and the jokes of the Chief Justice. He had a lodging which cost him £18 a year. Yet in a little he sent his sisters a five-pound note for pocket-money: which never arrived. No mortal man worked harder, or more steadily. In 1802, he allowed himself a first little tour on the Continent: the first French hotel he saw was 'like St. Salvator's College, St. Andrews.' He saw a good deal of a curious phase of London life among newspaper men. He beheld Porson drunk, repeating Milton magnificently with tears, then picked up in the kennel. He began to keep his terms, by dining in Lincoln's Inn Hall; where a certain Sugden introduced himself by asking what Campbell 'thought of the *scintilla juris*'? The strong heart now and then failed him: and he asks his father whether he might not get the appointment of Beadle of Cupar church. His brother George in due time went to India, and was speedily a prosperous man and always the kindest of brothers. His visits to Scotland were rare: and he felt what others have felt when he returned from them. In 1803, now twenty-four, he writes to his father:

The bustle of departure and hurry of travelling had prevented me from feeling in its full bitterness the pain of separation: but when I reached my home, saw no eye to welcome me, reflected that for hundreds of miles round there was no human being that cared for me, and remembered that in one corner there was a family who perhaps at that moment were weeping my absence, but from whom I was cut off, as it were, for ever,—then,—then—

Oh, write to me soon and say something to comfort me. I never was so cast down as now.

He now became a pupil of Tidd, the great Special

Pleader: having first taken his degree of M.A. at St. Andrews. The pupils generally were thoroughly idle, as law students often are: but Campbell worked with a will. His brother had provided the hundred a year which was Tidd's fee. Among the pupils then in Tidd's chambers together were Denman, afterwards Chief Justice of England; and Copley, Pepys, and Campbell, each to be Lord Chancellor. Campbell was terribly afraid he should be known for a newspaper man. The *Morning Chronicle* was taken in, and his own papers sometimes discussed. He felt himself, among the others, to be 'an adventurer,' creeping in some other way. When his pupilship with Tidd was ended, Tidd engaged him, at a hundred a year, to remain as head of the chambers: and now Campbell took chambers of his own, in Inner Temple Lane. It was the good brother in India through whose generosity all increase of comforts came. Here he became quite domestic: he writes to his father in September 1804:

I intend to dine frequently here at home, and to lay in a piece of cheese, to stock my cellar with ale and porter, and, as the citizens say, to study *comfort* a little more than I have hitherto done.

Next year he left the *Chronicle*, judging himself able to do without it: and in another year he was called to the Bar. It is pleasant to read a letter from Tidd to another Scotch Chancellor, just elevated,—Lord Erskine,—introducing two future Chancellors, Pepys and Campbell, 'both young men of very considerable legal abilities, most unremitting application, and of unexceptionable principles.' By this time David Wilkie, his aunt's step-son, had come to London, and was rising fast. The great day of Campbell's Call was November 15, 1806. He was twenty-seven. It was a great step, and attended with much expense,

borne by George. And Campbell set up a clerk: a boy of nine years old.

He went the Home Circuit: and he knew the sickness of heart which many have known. A memorable event was a visit of good Doctor Campbell to Inner Temple Lane. Though Campbell was often in deep despondency, he need not have been. In four years from his call, he was making £1000 a year. When he was thirty-seven, he was making £3000 a year. He had changed the ragged boy of nine for a faithful clerk, named Cooper (or, as he rendered it to his father, *Cupar*); whose name seemed ominous, and who abode with him to the end. Now he could write to his father hopefully:

Should I have been happier, vegetating as a country parson with a wife and children and £150 a year,—a dinner at the laird's the most splendid event in my life, and a ride to the market town on Presbytery day the external limit of my travels? No disappointment, disgust, or despondency, however deep, has ever made me sigh for the Kirk. You know I honour it, and reverence its ministers. But I never could have been useful, respectable, or happy, as one of the number.

By-and-by he changed to the Oxford Circuit, on which there was a better opening. Here he once walked thirty miles, without fatigue: he had a grand physical constitution, proved by his long life of active labour. And he moved his chambers to the pleasant locality of Paper Buildings. Good old Doctor Campbell was slow to credit his son's rise. When he was making £2000 a year, the Doctor wrote, 'I yet fondly hope to see the day when Jack shall be independent, employed, and respected.' And the Cupar folk were slower than their minister. There is just a shade of bitterness in a letter in which Campbell says, 'I don't despair of meeting with much civility and attention from my townsmen of Cupar, which I shall not fail

to do, when they know that their assistance can no longer be of use to me.' When Campbell had risen high, and the Cupar magistrates had to employ Counsel in some Parliamentary business, they took pains to mortify the old minister by employing any one but his son. Possibly the remembrance of such things was in the mind of the Chief Justice of England, when (so the story is told, true or not) some Cupar folk applied to him for a gift of the *Lives of the Lord Chancellors* for the Public Library; and received a curt note to the effect that the work might be had of any bookseller. An aged lady of the neighbourhood, many years ago, said to the writer, relating the history of the Campbell family, 'They meant John for the Church, but he went to London, *and got on very well.*' No doubt he had. For at that moment he was Chief Justice.

In the year 1813, having found that incapacity to dance was a social hindrance, Campbell set himself to acquire that accomplishment. And, characteristically, he received instruction with such earnestness and gravity, that it was supposed he designed to become a dancing-master: supposed, that is, by his teacher and fellow-disciples, to whom he was known by an assumed name, or as *the gentleman*. And now he began to think of marriage: though fearing he should not be able to marry till he should be too old. It is amusing to find his father exhorting him to steady and good behaviour, as though he were a thoughtless lad. His letters home are at this period extremely minute and interesting: and in one of them he remarks that if they fall into the hands of his brethren at the Bar, they would prove 'the importance of a man to himself and his father.' In the autumn of 1814, he allowed himself a fortnight's holiday at Cupar: to his brother he writes:

As I came in sight of Eden Bridge, I recognised the venerable figure of our father. You may be sure it was not long before I sprung from the coach-box into his arms. He looks, thank God, fresh and hearty. He is a little stiff, and can't stoop very well; but he can walk five or six miles with the utmost facility. He says he is now sixty-seven,—that is to say, in his sixty-eighth year, his birthday being in June.

On his return to the Temple, he writes to his father:

The fortnight I spent with you I consider as that in which I enjoyed the most happiness, and shall look back upon with the most satisfaction, of any period of my life.

In 1816, Campbell could afford himself a horse, which cost sixty guineas. And in that year (though he did not let his father know) he had the only severe illness of his life. For a time, ne thought it would be fatal:

The disappointment of all my ambitious projects cost me much less than I should have expected. I was chiefly distressed in anticipating how the news would be received by you, and still more, I think, the shock to be sustained by our poor father. When at the worst, I received a letter from him, describing his unexampled happiness in his children. A very unpleasant thing was going into Court to be gazed at by my brother circuiters. I never mentioned to any of them what was the matter with me, but from my looks they were exceedingly *sanguine*.

On the first Sunday in August 1817, he follows in thought the Communion Service in Cupar church:

From hour to hour I followed the service through its various stages till I thought you must have concluded your thanksgiving service in the evening. I wish I could assist at your forty-seventh Sacrament. Of all the religious ceremonies I have seen or read of, I find nothing so impressive and truly grand as the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the forms of the Church of Scotland.

Now the good brother George comes back from India, after eighteen years there, having made a

competent fortune. He bought a pretty property within two miles of his father's house, and built a handsome house on it. Here Sir George Campbell lived for thirty years as a country gentleman: having become an Elder of the Kirk. It was in 1818 that the two brothers took their father, three sisters, and some other near relatives, a tour through the most beautiful parts of the Highlands, and were hospitably entertained by a great Campbell, Lord Breadalbane, at Taymouth.

When we returned home, it was market day at Cupar, and I cannot forget my father's exultation as he was driven with four horses through the crowded streets with his sons beside him in what he considered 'a grand ovation.'

Things in this world so seldom occur dramatically, that the following incident should be preserved.

I yesterday conducted a prosecution (on the circuit, in Salop) for a robbery in the house of Robert Walker, of High Ercall, farmer. Several of his farming servants were examined who, from their superior appearance, as well as their dialect, easily discovered themselves to be Scotchmen. The prosecutor sat behind me, and as the judge was summing up I turned round to him and said, 'Mr. Walker, you seem to have got all your ploughmen from Scotland.'

W. 'I'm from Scotlan' mysel'.'

C. 'Indeed, from what part?'

W. 'From Fife, near Cupar.'

C. 'You are not a son of Mr. Walker, of Carslogie?'

W. 'Troth am I.'

C. 'Give me your hand.'

W. 'How do you come to ken onything aboot me?'

C. 'I am the son of Dr. Cawmel of Cupar.'

W. 'Lord Almighty! wha would ha' thought that?'

We had a very cordial talk about our Fife friends.

The rising barrister, with approval of the Chief Justice Tenterden, applied to the Chancellor for 'silk:' that is, the rank of King's Counsel. But Eldon, who had placed several scandalously incapable men on the Bench, because they were Tories, refused the application of the Whig and Scotchman. The

disappointment was only for a little while. A greater disappointment, also temporary, was when Campbell was refused by Miss Scarlett, daughter of the greatest advocate of that day, afterwards Attorney-General, and Chief Baron by the title of Lord Abinger. It was a terrible blow. But the lady thought better of it, and finally accepted Campbell: proving an inestimable partner through forty years of married life, and sharing all her husband's honours up to the highest. When she accepted his son, old Doctor Campbell wrote her a letter, which is preserved, and which leaves us the pleasantest impression of a warm-hearted and courtly old gentleman. Scotsman-like, he is delighted to know that she is 'descended from our clan.' Her mother was a Campbell. The marriage was on September 8, 1821. The dignitaries of the law were the first visitors of the young couple in their own house, splendid with the Campbell liveries. Earliest of all were Brougham and Denham.

A year after their marriage, Campbell and his wife visited Scotland, and spent some happy days with the Doctor at Cupar. But Campbell shakes one's confidence in his taste and judgment by the awful statement that Ayr was 'the ugliest place I ever entered.' It is a beautiful town, beautifully situated on the seashore, with a grand view of Arran. Assuredly it beats Cupar by degrees innumerable. But a certain perversity of opinion is by common consent 'Fifish.'

Not much more of his son's rise was to gladden Dr. Campbell's heart. John's name was being mentioned in connection with the Solicitor-Generalship: but that was all. The last letter to his father is dated November 16, 1824: and the old man died on November 24, having been minister of Cupar for fifty-one years. But the last shade of disappointment

that John would not be a Scotch minister had gone long before. His children placed a marble tablet in the church to his memory. The inscription is simple and touching: and it bears that his children placed it there. Within five years of Campbell's death the writer was looking at the tablet, the beadle standing by. 'Well,' was the remark, 'the good Doctor's children got on well.' The beadle gazed blankly. 'Don't you know that his son John rose to be Head of the English Law, to be what is called Lord Chancellor?' 'Never heard of it,' was the beadle's reply.

'I see, in my mind's-eye,' says Ellesmere in *Friends in Council*, 'a statue of Dunsford erected in Tollerporcorum:' Dunsford being supposed to have been born there, and the people of Tollerporcorum being proud of him. Ellesmere did not know Cupar-Fife.

The course was plain now. The desired Silk came, and Campbell frankly enjoyed it. The first trial of the barrister, idleness, was gone. The second had come, over-work. He began to be offered puisne judgeships. He might have been Mr. Justice Campbell twenty years before he sat on the English Bench. But he could and would wait for higher things. He was elected member for Stafford, in the way in which men became members for Stafford, as a moderate Liberal. Of course his father had been a Tory. An intelligent elector declared, in a speech, that Campbell would serve the constituency *with fidelity and truism*. The good man's meaning was plain. Campbell's letters to his brother at this period give an interesting view of the events accompanying the Reform Bill. But these belong to history. In November 1832, the long anticipated Solicitor-Generalship came. The Attorney-General was a very weak one, and was soon got rid of: Campbell attaining

that office in February 1834. 'The best thing in the Law,' the writer has heard a Chief Justice say to Campbell, when Lord Chancellor. 'Except the Chancellorship,' was the Chancellor's reply. 'No, not excepting the Chancellorship.' And the old judge smiled benignantly: as one who had been both.

As Solicitor, Campbell had sat for Dudley. Vacating his seat, he was now rejected: and had an uncomfortable three months till elected for Edinburgh by an immense majority. Lord Chancellor Brougham met him with much congratulation; and even Lord Lyndhurst 'could not in his heart be sorry.' The Master of the Rolls died in 1834, and Campbell, as Attorney, had a claim: but Pepys, Solicitor, was an Equity lawyer, and was preferred by Brougham. The Whig Ministry held on, getting rid (all the world knows how and why) of Brougham, and the Great Seal being put in Commission. In 1836 the feeble Pepys was made Chancellor by Melbourne, now Prime Minister; and Bickersteth Master of the Rolls. One of these offices was Campbell's by right: but he could not be spared from the Commons, and had to remain Attorney, but soothed by a peerage to his wife. She became Baroness Stratheden of Cupar. The little river Eden runs by Cupar: and the *country-side* is Stratheden. An unsuccessful attempt was made to divide the duties of the Chancellor, leaving Pepys to preside permanently in the Court of Chancery, and making Campbell a Judge of Appeal, removable with the Administration: and Campbell had to be content to hold the office of Attorney-General longer than any other man but one. It was hard, that he was so good an Attorney, that he could not be spared. If several degrees inferior, he would have been kicked upstairs. The case of *Norton v. Melbourne*, in which Campbell won laurels against Follett, is best forgot. Campbell

frankly tells us that Melbourne was quite capable of that of which he was accused: though in this case unjustly. Two of his daughters spent the summer of 1836 with his brother at St. Andrews, and went to see Cupar pulpit: and in that year, Mr. Attorney, now quite beyond the patronage of Cupar Town Council, was entertained at dinner there by all the royal Burghs of the county, which are many.

They all formed a grand procession, and conducted me in triumph over the bridge across the Eden, past the house where I was born, on to the Cross, and so I was placed under a canopy in the Town Hall. But when the addresses began, I was so affected that I could only sob violently. The memory of my father came across me, and I thought with myself what his sensations would have been if he could have witnessed this scene. However, all was ascribed to 'goodness of heart,' and no eloquence could have more ingratiated me with my fellow-townsmen.

After all, Lord Campbell ought to have given the *Lives of the Chancellors* to the Cupar Library. Had we been in his place, we should have given at least two copies.

In March 1838, his chambers in Paper Buildings were burnt. The loss, to many, was terrible. The Attorney lamented most a great collection of letters from his father and brother. The carelessness of Maule, Senior Wrangler and afterwards Judge, caused this great trouble; and earned for him the title, among young Templars, of the Fire-King.

The Melbourne Ministry held on, with ever-diminishing character, and the day of its dissolution loomed in view. A General Election came on in the summer of 1841: and whenever it was resolved upon, Lord John Russell and Lord Melbourne desired to make provision for the Attorney-General to whom they owed so much. They spontaneously offered him the Irish Chancellorship as successor to Lord

Plunket. Campbell did not like the arrangement ; but it was the best that was open. It indeed did no more than provide a dignified retirement from the labours of the Bar : for it was certain that Campbell would hold the office for so short a time, that by his own proposal he was appointed without claim to the usual pension of £4000 a year on retirement. Now, at length, the St. Andrews student became a peer. His title was Baron Campbell of St. Andrews. Lord Plunket objected, at the last, to resign, on the ground that he would be compromised in public opinion if he helped to get Lord Campbell a retiring salary after a few weeks' and months' service. The difficulty was removed. Plunket resigned : but at his last appearance in Court he stated that resignation was forced upon him : that he disapproved Campbell's appointment, and thought the office should be filled by a member of the Irish Bar. All Plunket in fact did, was to resign six weeks sooner than he must have resigned, in any case, an office to which his failing strength was unequal. And his obligations to the Government were great. Not only had he himself been Chancellor of Ireland, but he had got his son made a Bishop, he having himself been the son of a Dissenting minister. So incompetent was Plunket's son to hold the Episcopal office, that he could not write his own charge. He got his chaplain to write it. And the chaplain, following his master's example, copied a charge of Archbishop Sumner of Canterbury. Bishop and chaplain were at once found out.

Lord Campbell at once entered upon his duty at Dublin, Plunket and he becoming quite friendly. The result of the General Election was soon apparent. And Campbell, who had made a most favourable impression upon the Irish, O'Connell included, re-

turned to his house in New Street, Spring Gardens, a pensionless peer, his practice at the Bar, which had been immense, at an end. Nine long years had to pass before his elevation to the English Bench. He served the country diligently in the judicial business of the Privy Council and the House of Peers. In 1842 he took possession of Stratheden House: and, incapable of idleness, he set himself to the composition of his *Lives of the Chancellors*. The first series was published at the end of 1845, and met with immediate success. The subject was interesting, and it suited the author: and Campbell's treatment of it met all but universal praise. There was one exception. Brougham wrote in a newspaper a violent attack on Campbell rather than on his work, calling him Plain John, and his Lives 'ponderous trifles.' Next day he made some inquiry of Campbell concerning the work, stating that he had not yet been able to look at it. Campbell laughed in his face without giving him any answer. In 1846 Campbell bought the estate of Hartrigge, in Roxburghshire, in a beautiful country, near the junction of the Jed and the Teviot. Here he built a handsome house, 'hoping that there the Lords Stratheden and Campbell might long be settled.' The house and its furniture cost near £10,000. When the Whig Government came into power in 1846, Lord Campbell had a seat in the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The Irish Chancellorship was given to an Irishman. In 1847, to his great joy, his eldest son was elected member for Cambridge. The second and third series of the *Chancellors* were as popular as the first: Brougham kindly explaining that people must make up their sets.

The years were going on; and in 1849 Lord Campbell was in his seventieth year. Wilde had been

made Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, to which as Attorney-General he had a recognised claim: but a higher place was coming to Campbell. In the summer of 1849, Lord Denman had a paralytic attack: and Lord Chancellor Cottenham was very ill: so that Lyndhurst said to Campbell, 'Well, you will have your choice to be a Chancellor or a Chief Justice.' On October 11, 1849, Lord John Russell wrote to Lord Campbell that Lord Denman could not be expected to fulfil his duties on the Bench ever again; and offering, with the Chancellor's approval, the great place of Chief Justice of England. It had come at last: though late. Campbell, who did not feel exhilarated at first, liked the prospect more and more on longer thought: liked it better than the Chancellorship. He took forthwith to getting up the newest fashions of Westminster Hall, from which he had been so long withdrawn; began to read that awful work known to law students as 'Co. Litt.' Never did Templars burst into heartier applause than when, in a Haymarket play, Buckstone, being asked to bring a soporific for a nervous patient, returned with that famous treatise. Baron Rolte, afterwards to be Chancellor as Lord Cranworth, and long Solicitor under him, coached the new Chief Justice. But difficulties arose. Denman, though quite unfit for duty, proposed to hold on, to keep Campbell out. Denman's mind must have been grievously weakened: for the offence was that Campbell, in his *Life of Holt*, had stated that Chief Justices did not always come up to expectation; which Denman regarded as an insult to himself. Then Denman said to Brougham, 'Campbell would behave ill to my puisnes: I must protect my puisnes.' Personal enemies of Campbell and opponents of the Government attacked him in the press: one paper

stating that there are various sorts of *assassination*, and that Lord Campbell is seeking to assassinate Lord Denman by paragraphs in the ministerial papers stating that he ought to resign from ill-health, whereas there is nothing the matter with him. Other papers pointed out Campbell's advanced age. We quote from the Diary :

All this seems rather hard upon me, as I have not had the remotest connection or privity with anything inserted in any newspaper upon the subject, and in truth Lord Denman has been treated with great forbearance and delicacy, as nothing has been said about his paralysis, and the degree to which he is incapacitated is cautiously concealed. I might most truly say that I am almost quite indifferent about the office: it has entirely lost all its charms. And, indeed, I do not think I could do its duties nearly as well as if I had been appointed six months ago.

The storm blew over. On March 1, 1850, Lord Denman formally resigned. The Chancellor then saw Mr. Justice Coleridge and other puisnes of the Queen's Bench, who all expressed the greatest readiness to serve under Lord Campbell. Next day, at a meeting of the Cabinet, the Prime Minister said, 'My lords and gentlemen, let me present you to the Chief Justice of England.' Lord Campbell shook hands with all: thanked them for their kindness while their colleague: and immediately withdrew.

We had a merry evening at home, and forgot all our anxiety. On Sunday we all went to Church together, and took the Holy Communion, praying that I might be enabled to perform the new duties to devolve upon me.

The great place was reached. And it remained for the Chief Justice to prove himself equal to it.

How he did so, the world knows. Even those who did not like Lord Campbell had to acknowledge that a more competent Chief Justice never presided in the Queen's Bench.

Yet, though his elevation was warmly received by both political parties, it is true that he was violently attacked by some up to the time of his appointment. 'Without the slightest provocation on my part,' he says in his Diary, 'I am assailed by a storm of flippancy, scurrility, and falsehood.' We may judge of it, by what Miss Martineau wrote of his elevation, after his death:—

Literature was not sufficient to occupy the energies of this industrious lawyer; nor his office to satisfy his ambition. As might easily have been anticipated, he found another Judge who might be persuaded that he was too old and infirm for office, and had better resign in his favour. His old friend, Lord Denman, was pronounced in 1849 so infirm that he ought to resign the Chief Justiceship. Lord Denman protested, as Lord Plunket had done, that he was perfectly well able to go through his duties: but Lord Campbell thought otherwise; and immediately the newspapers began to bewail Lord Denman's weight of years, and to predict that his sprightly comrade would soon be in his seat: and early in 1850 the event took place accordingly. When the spectators who saw him take his seat for the first time remarked on the 'green old age' of the vivacious Judge, they asked one another, with mirth like his own, who would ever be able to persuade him that he was too old for office. Would he meet with a successor who would take no denial on that point, as he had taken none from the two old friends whom he had superseded? \*

The spitefulness of the passage is obvious. The full measure of its falsehood is not known to all.

Eleven years remained: years of very hard but happy and dignified work; and of Hartrigge in the autumn. In leisure hours he wrote his *Lives of the Chief Justices*. In 1854 his brother died: and on May 26th was laid beside their father.

The ceremony was conducted according to the Presbyterian fashion,—solemn prayers in the house before the procession began, and no religious service at the grave. The whole was awful and impressive. But the English Burial Service is very fine, and as I think it would be agreeable to the feelings of my family, I should wish it to be adopted

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\* *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 251, 252.

when my time comes, and my remains are deposited in Jedburgh Abbey, where a resting-place is secured for us in very holy ground.

When the Palmerston Ministry came into office in 1859, the Chief Justice was asked to become Lord Chancellor; being the oldest man who ever took that office. He was in his eightieth year. But, body and mind, he was equal to his work: and it was a fitting close of his career. In March 1860, his wife was taken: it was the heaviest trial, and the last. Yet he rallied: and in September of that year there was beautiful weather, and he 'had great enjoyment' of Hartrigge. Some can testify that indeed he had; and will not cease to remember how the old Lord Chancellor, still with every sense alert, and able to walk over rough ways for three hours at a stretch,—surrounded, for the last time, by nearly all his children,—and telling old stories of St. Mary's College long ago, passed that final holiday-time. He returned to his duties in London, and continued to fulfil them with all due efficiency. The last entry in his Diary was on Wednesday, June 12, 1861:—

Thank Heaven, I have got through my work creditably, if not splendidly. . . . I should not mind at all being honourably released from the labours and anxieties of the Great Seal. *Pergustavi Imperium*, and I should be satisfied to have repose during the remaining short space of my earthly career.

But he was to be a Chancellor who never received a retiring pension. All the pay he ever received from his country was in return for present work: none for work past. The idea would have pleased him. On Saturday, June 22, he sat in the Court of Chancery: in the afternoon he attended a Cabinet meeting, and walked home to Stratheden House. Then he sat down to his desk and wrote a judgment. There was a party at dinner: and speaking to his old friend, Sir

David Dundas, of one who had long been lying on a sick bed, having lost all his faculties, Lord Campbell said he would wish a clause added to the Litany : 'From a lingering illness, good Lord, deliver us.' Throughout the evening, he talked with his usual animation ; and he bade his children good-night about twelve o'clock. Next morning at eight his servant went into his room. He was sitting in his arm-chair, dead : spared 'a lingering illness,' 'honourably released from the labours and anxieties of the Great Seal.'

One thing was lacking in his career. Had he lived a little longer, we should doubtless have read, in the chronicle of such events, 'The Earl of Stratheden resigned the Great Seal.'

His body was carried to Hartrigge. And on Saturday, June 29, with the beautiful service of the Anglican Church which he had desired, he was laid beside his wife in the ruined Abbey of Jedburgh.

(1882.)

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## XVII.

CONCERNING THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING A CANTAN-  
KEROUS FOOL; WITH SOME THOUGHTS ON THE  
TREATMENT OF INCAPACITY.\*

REPROACHFUL face of *Fraser*, here you are again ! Once I hailed you with joy : now I behold you with sorrow, mingled with remorse. Rare were the numbers, once on a time, in which I had not my little share : and my hope for various years was, that this might always go on. But now the months pass, faster and faster : and the magazine comes : and there is nothing of mine in it. Very many were the essays this hand used to write : very few they have been for the last two years. And wherefore is it so ? Is it that I have no time to write ? Truly never man was harder worked : yet I was worked just as hard when each magazine had its pages of mine. Much worried ? Yes, indeed, and liking it almost less ; yet the time was when it was relief from worry, to sit down at this table and write away. Is it that I have got nothing more to say ? Not entirely so. Thoughts not unfrequently arise, which in the old days would have furnished matter for sixteen pages of feeble reflection. But with advancing time one grows more modest ; and feels less disposed to speak unless sure

\* This chapter was published in *Fraser's Magazine* for September 1866.

that one has something to say which is worth hearing. THAT is the thing. The day comes, when not the friend who pitches into you most viciously in print, thinks so badly of your doings as you think yourself. And, instead of desiring to add to the number of your pages, you wish heartily you could blot out many that exist already. When a man reaches forty, he thinks differently of many things.

Yet let me, once again, try to do something in the old way: before finally resolving to do the like no more. Let me, not unkindly, set forth the praises of Cantankerous and Pig-headed Folly; and show certain reasons why it is profitable to a human being that he be a Cantankerous Fool.

There are cantankerous fools whom you can keep at arm's length: cantankerous fools with whom you need have nothing to do: cantankerous fools whom, having seen once, you need never see again. But human beings are linked by many social ties: not even our gracious Sovereign herself can successfully resolve that she will never have anything to do with anybody she does not like. And very often you find that you cannot escape from many relations with a cantankerous fool; and that you must just make the best of that offensive being.

Now, how carefully you consider the tempers, the crotchetts, the idiotic notions and prejudices, of the cantankerous fool from whom you cannot escape! As for a human being of good sense and good temper, nobody, in the common transactions of life, minds *him*. Nobody smoothes him down: pets him: considers him: tries to keep him right. You take for granted he will do right, and act sensibly, without any management. If you are driving a docile and well-tempered horse, who is safe to go straight, you give the animal little thought or attention. But if you have to drive a refractory pig,

how much more care and thought you put into that act of driving ! Your wits must be alive : you humour the abominable brute : you try to keep it in a good temper : and when you would fain let fly at its head, or apply to it abusive epithets, you suppress the injurious phrase, and you hold back the ready hand. So with many a human being, whom you are trying to get to act rationally : who hangs back on all kinds of idiotic pretexts, and starts all conceivable preposterous objections to the course which common sense dictates : frequently changing his ground, and defying you to pin him to any reason he states, as is the way with such creatures. When your tongue is ready to exclaim, ' O you disgusting and wrong-headed fool, will you not try to behave rationally ? ' you withhold the ready and appropriate words : you know *that* would blow the whole thing up : and you probably say in friendly tones, ' My good fellow, there is a great deal in your objections ; and we have all the greatest desire to do what you may wish : but then there are A, and B, difficult men to deal with : and in this little matter, you must just let us do what has been arranged. Pray do this, and we shall all be very greatly obliged to you.' Perhaps you even degrade yourself by suggesting to the cantankerous fool reasons which you know to be of no weight, but which your knowledge of the fool makes you think may have weight with his idiotic mind. By little bits of deference and attention, rendered with a smooth brow, beneath which lurks the burning desire to take him by the neck and shake him, you seek to keep straight the inevitable cantankerous fool. Yes, my reader, if you want to be deferred to, humoured, made much of : if you want to have everybody about you trying to persuade you to act as a sensible man would act without any persuasion ; and everybody quite pleased and happy if you have been got after much

difficulty into the right track ; see that you set yourself before that portion of mankind that cannot get rid of you in the important and influential character of an ill-tempered and wrong-headed fool.

The jibbing horse in the team : the loose screw in the machine : the weak link of the chain : *they* are the important things. People think of them : watch them : stand a good deal to keep them right. As Brutus shammed himself a fool for protection, so might a wise man in these days sham himself a fool for consideration. Don't be sensible and good-natured : nobody will be afraid of your sulking then. But be always taking offence : striking work : refusing to go where you ought : and you will meet the highest consideration. People may indeed confound you behind your back : but before your face they will be civil to a degree they never would be with an amiable and judicious man. You see, you may explode at any moment. You may lie down in the shafts at any moment. You may kick out furiously at any moment. So all hands will try to keep you in good humour.

The human being who is called a *Privileged Person* is generally a cantankerous fool. Sometimes, indeed, the privileged person is so privileged because of the possession of invaluable qualities which make you bear with anything he says and does. Even where these are amiss, they are so magnificently counter-balanced. But the cantankerous fool from whom there is no escaping, is the most privileged of all privileged people. No matter how ill-bred and provoking he is, you must just suffer it. No matter how far in the wrong he is, you must just try to smooth him down and make things straight. If you get into any altercation or difference with the fool, you are at a great disadvantage. *He* has no character to lose : but you probably have a reputation for good sense and good humour.

which any conspicuous disturbance would damage. Then, restrictions of decency in language and conduct fetter you, which are to the fool what the green rushes were to Samson. You could not for your life get up and roar, as you have seen the fool get up and roar.

If you know a man will bellow like a bull if you differ from him in opinion, you just listen to his opinion and hold your tongue. If you know a dog bites you give him a wide berth. If a ditch be very pestiferous when stirred up, you don't stir it up. The great principle on which the privileges of cantankerous folly and ill-nature found is this: that as we go on through life we grow somewhat cowardly: and if a thing be disagreeable, we just keep out of its way: sometimes by rather shabby expedients.

Well, after all, the deference paid to the cantankerous fool is not a desirable deference. True it is that if you have to get twelve men to concur with you in a plan for bringing water into the town of which you are chief magistrate, or painting the church of which you are incumbent, or making some improvement in the management of the college of which you are principal, you bestow more pains and thought on the one impracticable, stupid, wrongheaded, and cantankerously foolish person of the twelve, than upon all the other eleven. But this is just because you treat that impracticable and cantankerous person as you would treat a baby, or an idiot, or a bulldog, or a jackass. The apparent deference you pay the cantankerous man, is simply an inferior degree of the same thing that makes you confess yourself a teapot if a raving madman has you at an open window, and says he will throw you over unless you forthwith confess yourself a teapot. Pigheaded folly is so disagreeable a thing, that you would do a good deal to keep it from intruding itself upon your reluctant gaze; and the can-

tankerous fool, petted, smoothed down, complimented, deferred to, is truly in the most degraded position a rational being can easily reach. 'O let us humour him: he is only Snooks the cantankerous fool; ' 'Give in to him a little: he will make no end of a row it you don't:' such are the reflections of the people who yield to him. If he had any measure of sense, he would see how degraded is his position: what a humiliating thing it is to be deferred to on the terms on which he is deferred to. But the notion of the presence of sense is excluded by the very terms of his definition. For how can there be sense in a cantankerous fool?

All this, the thoughtful reader sees, leads us up to the wide and important subject of the Treatment of Incapacity. *That* varies, in the most striking way, as the position of the incapable person varies.

If a servant, lately come home, proves quite unfit for his work, you first scold him; and if that avail nothing, then you send him away. If the grocer who supplies you with tea and sugar, persists in supplying you with execrably bad tea and sugar, you resign your position as his customer: you enter his shop no more. But if the incapable person is in a sufficiently important place; and cannot be turned out of it; the treatment is entirely different. You stand up for the man. You puff him. You deny that he is incapable. You say he is 'a very good appointment,' however abominably bad you know him to be. The useless judge you declare to be a sound lawyer, whose modesty hinders the general recognition of merits. The clergyman who neglects his duty shamefully, and whose sermons no man can listen to, you declare to be a good sensible preacher, with no claptrap about him: none of your new brooms that sweep far too clean. The peculiar treatment of the wrong man in the wrong

place (by cautious and safe people), is loudly to declare that he is the right man in the right place. The higher the place he disgraces, the louder and firmer the asseveration. And if any man speaks out the fact of the incapacity which all men see, then you bully that man, fly at him, abuse him ; you tell him his conduct is indecorous, is indecent. You declare that it is not to be supposed that what he says is true : being all the while well aware that it is true.

If a poor curate be idle and stupid, so stupid that he could not do his work if he tried, and so idle that he will not try, that poor curate is sent away. But if the incumbent of a rather important parish be all that, you go on a different tack. You say his health is not good. His church is not empty : on the contrary, it is very respectably attended. It strikes a stranger indeed as empty ; but those who attend it regularly (especially the incompetent incumbent himself) think it very fairly filled ; and of course they are the best judges. This crucial case will help the ingenious reader to the great principle which decides the treatment of incapacity. It is this. An evil you can remove, you look in the face. You see how bad it is. You even exaggerate its badness. But an evil you cannot get rid of, you try not to see. You seek to discover redeeming points about it. If you have a crooked stick to walk with, and cannot get another, you make the best of the crooked stick : you persuade yourself it is nearly straight. But if a handsome stick is offered you in its place, you pitch the wretched old thing away. Your eyes are opened to a full sense of its crookedness. In brief, the great rule is, that you make the best of a bad bargain.

Many married people have to do so. They are well aware that in marrying, they made an unhappy mistake. But they just try to struggle on : though the

bitter blunder is felt every day. One great evil of the increased facility of divorce in these latter days, is that it tends to make men and women hastily conclude that a state of things is intolerable, which while deemed inevitable was borne with decent resignation. You try to put a good face on the trouble which cannot be redressed. You 'make believe very much ;' as all human beings have at some period of life in regard to their worldly position ; the situation of their home ; the state of their teeth ; the incursions of age on their personal beauty. You were resolved to believe your dwelling a handsome and pleasant one ; and your place in life not such a dead failure as in your desponding hours you plainly saw it to be. And who but a malignant fool would try to dispel the kindly delusion which keeps a man from quite breaking down ? If your friend Smith was in his own eyes what he is in yours, he would lie down and die overcome by his sense of being such a wretched little jackass. My friend Jones told me that once upon a time, attending a sitting of the House of Peers in Mesopotamia he heard a man make a speech every sentence of which cried aloud that the speaker was an inexpressible fool. At first, Jones was indignant at the speaker's manifest self-satisfaction. But gradually Jones became reconciled to the state of facts as this consideration presented itself to his reflective understanding : That if the unhappy orator had thought of himself and his appearance as Jones thought of both, he would have fled to the remote wilderness and never been seen more !

How are you to manage a cantankerous fool ? If possible, you will of course avoid him. But how are you to deal with those whom you cannot avoid ? Well I know it does not sound magnanimous : but I fear you can govern the cantankerous fool only by careful consideration of his nature ; and adaptation of your

means to that. I mean, you will not suggest to him reasons of conduct which would have weight only with men of sense. If you want to melt a piece of wax, you bring it in contact with fire. But if you do the like with a piece of clay, the clay is hardened, not softened. In like manner, there are arguments and considerations which would make a man of good sense and temper go to the right, which would make the cantankerous fool go to the left. What profit, then, in suggesting to the fool motives which his nature incapacitates him for understanding? You must deal with the animal as you find him: move him by the things that will make him move. The whipcord, which makes the donkey go, has no effect when applied to the locomotive engine: yet the whipcord serves its end when it makes the donkey go. And the reason which, being suggested to the sensible man, would make him ask you if you thought him a fool, will often avail to move the fool in the direction in which you would have him proceed.

I can see plainly that in thus managing the cantankerous fool, you run the risk of falling to the use of means savouring of the base. But no rule can be laid down which may not be carried to an extreme. And we can but say, never say or do that which is sneaking or dishonest: even though by so doing you could get the fool to behave like a man of sense for many hours, or at the most critical juncture. I do not believe that honesty is the best policy. I have seen many cases in which it was plainly the worst. Yet honesty is unquestionably the thing for an honest man. And let the advice, to govern the fool by regarding his nature, be understood as counselling you to do so, as far as an honest man may.

The truth is you govern by obeying. You get material nature to do what you want, by finding out its

laws, and conforming to them. If you desire to order water to boil, you command it so to do by obeying the law which says, that water shall boil, being placed upon a fire. If you would require a field to supply you in September with a crop of wheat, you do so by obeying the field's nature in many ways: ploughing the field (which it demands of you): sowing it, and that in the due season: in short, you humour that field in its likings; and in return for humouring its likings you get the field to do what you like. So with the fool: so, in truth, with the wise man too. All this is fair and aboveboard. But when you come to manage the fool by means analogous to that of him, who knowing his pig would advance only in the opposite direction from that he desired, affected the desire that the pig should go north when the deep craving of his heart was that the pig should indeed go south,—you are going on a tack whose honesty is questionable.

There is a process, singularly offensive to the writer, of which one sometimes hears mention. It is that of KEEPING PEOPLE SWEET: such is the offensive idiom. It is a process not needful in the case of sensible people, who have no tendency to turn sour: it is a mode of operation specially applicable in the case of the cantankerous fool. It consists in paying special deference to the person to be kept sweet: in going frequently and asking his advice on matters as to which you have already made up your mind, and as to which you know well his opinion is of no possible value: in trying to smooth him down when he takes the pet, as he often does: in making many calls upon him: in conveying by many tacit signs that you esteem him as very wise, very handsome, very influential. I have used the masculine gender through the last sentence: though the peculiar usage described is much employed in the case of old women of pecuniary means. Sometimes,

indeed, old women of no wealth nor influence wish people to take pains to keep them sweet: but in these instances the old women are generally permitted just to remain in a condition of unalleviated acidity.

O judicious reader, wise and amiable, and not unimportant, receive it as a high testimony to your sense and temper, if no human being tries to keep you sweet! For in all ordinary cases, the fact that you try to keep any mortal sweet, testifies to your firm conviction that the mortal in question is a silly if not a cantankerous fool!

But let us turn from these thoughts, some of which are irritating, to something sure to soothe. It is now 11.30 P.M., and it is early in July. Alas, the time of green leaves and bright days, how fast it goes! Let us pull up the blind that covers part of that bay-window, and look out upon the calm night, from which the daylight has not quite passed away. First, there is a little bit of grass: beyond, at the foot of a cliff of forty feet, the famous Bay. There it spreads, smooth as glass in the twilight: a great solitary expanse. Beyond, many miles off, there is a long range of purple hills. Under those waters rests that noble chime of bells that belonged to our cathedral: the bells went down with the vessel which was carrying them away. To this sacred spot Christian pilgrims have come for fifteen hundred years: a good many of them, not improbably, being cantankerous fools. And looking on the calm sea amid this hush of nature: thinking of the solemn associations of the ancient place; the writer heard twelve o'clock sound from silvery bells that were here before the Reformation, and concluded that it was time to go to bed.

(1868.)

## XVIII.

### BETTER AWAY.\*

WHERE is it that I am at this minute? I who have been hardly anywhere, and seen hardly anything?

There is an advantage in that. The strangeness and freshness of things remain, even to one who has served in his vocation for thirty years. They go, from such as have been everywhere. Two days since, I listened to a friend giving an address. He made mention of the Mount of Olives: and said *I have often been there*. He spoke of the famous city of Ephesus; and said *I have been there twice: there was not a living thing visible, but a fox which ran out of the ruined theatre*. He has been pretty well everywhere: the next thing is to be Japan. But he confessed to me, on being severely interrogated, that something was lost. He is not surprised, now, to find himself anywhere. To that travelled man it is not so strange to be in any corner, how remote soever of God's earth, as it is to me to be here, by myself, on this beautiful afternoon in May, among the Kentish glades and hills.

It is an airy road this: it lies high: the prospect it commands is wide. On the right, miles away, there is a broad river: on the left, miles away, there is a broad river, with a long line of bright green level stretching by its side. Those are *The Marshes*, which

\* Written in 1882.

I had fancied would have looked black, like an Irish bogland. Possibly at a bleaker season they may. It is a pretty road : I have seen much prettier in Perthshire. And though there, on the right, are the renowned Cobham woods, the prospect as a whole is not so richly wooded as one had expected. Going on, I see before me a quaint little city. The outstanding features are a magnificent Castle, a ruin, yet glorious as in mediæval days ; vast, lofty, rising from the edge of the river : and a Cathedral Church, which is charming when you enter it, charming for its venerable surroundings when you are close to it. But the tower, which is all one sees from this point, is recent, and not worthy at all.

For that is *Cloisterham* : known in prosaic fact as Rochester. I have been at Gadshill : I have gone over all the house : have been all about the garden, the meadow, the wilderness where the Châlet stood : I have gone through the tunnel which passes under the highway : and links the severed portions of the little domain. And now I am walking the three miles from Gadshill to Rochester, by the road trodden times innumerable by Dickens, and passing through scenes so dear to that great genius. *Pickwick* takes you speedily to Rochester. *Great Expectations* is all about Rochester, and the strange marsh country which reaches along the Thames from Gravesend to the Nore. *Edwin Drood* takes you to Rochester again and keeps you steadily there. And the last lines the magician's hand wrote on the beautiful June day on whose evening he was stricken down, are a description of the lovely Kentish country in its June luxuriance and glory, and the delightful city : the last paragraph of all describing the morning service in Rochester Cathedral : describing it not very sympathetically, and therefore by no means accurately. The fact was, that Dickens in his

later days had not much experience of any services, cathedral or other. One recalls the easy way in which the Ettrick Shepherd records the ecclesiastical proclivities of another teller of stories, who has charmed even more thousands than Dickens ; and who lived in a country and an age wherein public opinion put stronger pressure upon human beings than in London or in Kent in 1870. James Hogg, celebrating the noble qualities of Sir Walter Scott, brings his pæan to a climax in these remarkable words : *He was no admirer of sectarianism, and seldom went to church.* It was a strange way of putting the fact in Scotland, about the year 1833.

Never mind about that. Both Dickens and Scott have preached to their fellow-men as very few, whether in church or out of it, ever did. And each sleeps beneath the Church's shade. I say to myself, in amazement, walking down this hill, making for the new bridge that spans the Medway, I have been at Gadshill : I have been in his study, and the room in which he was stricken down, in which he died : I have been in every corner of the bit of ground he held so dear : I have seen traces of his orderly ways, his tidiness, his love of light and brightness, his desire not to be overlooked and stared at : I have marked that in his garden, not to be annoyed by gaps in the box-edgings of his walks, he sacrificed beauty to accuracy, and edged his walks with unæsthetic bricks. And as for the tunnel, it is disappointing. You go down a deep well, whose sides are ivy-clad : you pass under the highway : and then climb up another similar well. There was ten times the trouble of walking across the public road : but then, there was the sense that the little estate of eleven acres was made into one instead of being cut in two. Doubtless, too, there were summer days on which a crowd of sight-seers

would have gathered before the luncheon-hour, to behold the inspired and immortal Cockney returning from his forenoon's work in the Châlet, up among the June branches, and the June scents and sounds, had it remained needful for him to cross the public way. Mr. Anthony Trollope asserts, on one of his sunshiny pages, that it is esteemed by the rising author as a great reward, *monstrari digito*. But after the heights of fame have been reached, it appears to become painful to pass through this life amid whispers of *That's him [sic]*: *Here he comes: There he goes*. The house is smaller in all respects than one had expected: the rooms are small: the public road passes in front, very close indeed. The more pleasing view of the house is from the meadow behind it. Cobham woods, greatly beloved by Dickens, come near on that side: but distances to him, who enjoyed a walk of fifteen miles, were less than to most men of his years. It is not here as at Abbotsford, where things remain as nearly as may be as the Wizard left them. Gadshill has passed into other hands and belongs to the race of Dickens no longer. In the study, a chair and table like his stand in the old place. Many have seen Mr. Fildes' picture of *The Empty Chair: Gadshill, June 9, 1870*. His bookshelves remain. In these days of oak, one is surprised to find them of mahogany. But the door abides, covered with backs of sham books. None of the titles are quite so felicitous as Hood's *Cursory Remarks on Swearing*. Yet there are three volumes, Burke (of Edinburgh) *On the Sublime and Beautiful*; three more, *Five Minutes in China*; one, Hudson's *Complete Failure*; and twenty, *The History of a Short Chancery Suit*. It may here be said that the history of Burke (of Edinburgh) is being forgot: I have found educated people who never heard of him. He was well known once: better than

a more deserving man who bore the same name. A Scotsman, who held a distinguished place in his day, was once invited to dine with Louis Philippe. After dinner, the King took the Dignitary into his special library, and said, 'You see, I am well provided with your English literature: there are all the writings of your illustrious countryman Burke.' But the eminent Scotsman had never heard but of one Burke: and he burst forth 'Burke, the blackguard: I went all the way to Edinburgh and saw him hanged!' On this, the Monarch turned the conversation to other matters, no doubt of great interest.

But we shall never get on at this rate. It was Dickens who wrote *Let there be no meandering*. Gads-hill is a possession for ever: or at least for as long as I shall want it. I have come out from the little gate: passed the little Inn where Dickens put up his friends when his own house was over-crowded: parted (with due thanks) from the kind friend, never seen till to-day, through whose introduction the house was opened to me: and now I am drawing near to Rochester. It is all very strange. I have passed the cross roads, where a road runs into the *Hundred of Hoo*, the marsh country. By the wayside, in a shady spot, a tramp of specially villainous appearance, seated on a stone, as I drew near, began to sing, in a loud and not unmelodious voice, a verse of one of good Doctor Horatius Bonar's hymns. Much parochial experience has made some folk more suspicious than of yore. And I confess that coming down Gadshill one reflected on Sir John Falstaff's statement that he had worn out his voice in singing anthems, as the villainous-looking tramp, regarding me with a keenly-observant eye, lifted up his voice and sang (in good time and tune), *Then, O my Lord, prepare my soul for that great day: Oh wash me in Thy precious blood, And take my*

*sins away.* It may have been Jasper, formerly leading tenor in the Cathedral Choir, returned from a lengthy sentence of penal servitude for killing Edwin Drood. Now, passing under a railway bridge, one has entered the street of Strood, which is the portion of Rochester on the farther side of the Medway from the Castle and Cathedral. By-and-by, here is Rochester Bridge : a new one, which has taken the place of that over which Mr. Pickwick looked on a sunshiny morning many years ago. Alongside it is a great and ugly viaduct, by which the railway, coming from London, makes for Canterbury and Dover. Cross the Bridge : and to right and left everything you see makes you feel that you are indeed in Cloisterham.

It is reward for the privation of very much, that the capacity of vivid wonder at finding one's self in a strange place abides even in one who has grown old.

Standing in the corner of the dining-room at Gadshill in which Charles Dickens died, one recalled the touching lines written by his daughter :

‘ As during his life Charles Dickens’s fondness for air, light, and gay colours amounted almost to a passion, so when he lay dead in the home he had so dearly loved, these things were not forgotten.

‘ The pretty room opening into the conservatory (from which he had never been removed since his seizure) was kept bright with the most beautiful of all kinds of flowers, and flooded with the summer sun.’

And going back just a page, one reads :

‘ Charles Dickens remained in the same unconscious state until the evening of this day, when, at ten minutes past six, the watchers saw a shudder pass over him, heard him give a deep sigh, saw one tear roll down his cheek, and he was gone from them. And as they saw the dark shadow steal across his calm,

beautiful face, not one among them—could they have been given such a power—would have recalled his sweet spirit back to earth.'

One is deeply touched by these last words. They were written, one knows, not without a tear: and the eyes moisten in reading them. But I am not sure at all what is meant: possibly the writer could not exactly tell. Is this just the pathetic *Better as It Is*: said times without number with no reason at all, because it would break the heart if one did not make believe that it is so? Is it that one is so sure that the friend who has gone, has gone to things infinitely better (but not to be spoken of unless by those professionally accredited), that one would not wish him back to worldly troubles? Or is it that things have come to such a pass here, that one is best away from them? I do not suggest at all the *anywhere, out of the world*: there must be shame as well as sorrow before it comes to that. And though the last days were days of special love and honour, one recalls how a good man, telling that he had stood over the open grave of a great evangelist of later days, said, 'I did not feel sorrowful: for he was weary, weary in the work.' And though the daughter of the lovable genius gone thus said of her father that he was *Better Away*, this was not the unlamented departure of the old Jewish story. I find not many know that the Bible contains the words *He departed without being desired*: died, that is, and nobody missed him: nobody cared. You don't like exactly to say that you are glad that any one is dead: the utmost length permitted is that you are not sorry. And a whole nation did at least once say just that of an unbeloved King. But here, the paradoxical thing is, that speaking of one greatly beloved and bitterly lamented, taken while he was still enjoying life keenly, even to little things like the lamps he had hung up in

his conservatory (he is gone twelve years and he would only have been seventy now), a daughter who was a pattern of affection and duty should say she did not want her father back again. I am perfectly aware that we have all said exactly the same thing in like circumstances. One's heart goes entirely with the good daughter in her touching declaration: but the head is perplexed. It is not as when one has felt, in the first bitter grief, that the lost friend was so weary, so broken, life had become so ravelled, so incapable of coming to anything satisfactory now, that it was best to go. Still less as when one has felt that the lost friend had got upon a perilous slope whence the tendency was to unnamed sin and shame: and one was thankful he was dead without some awful exposure. Even there, though far less than thinking merely of 'hollow cheek and wasted eye,' the curious dualism of inconsistent feeling is well known by most of us. 'Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live: Ask me no more.' I suppose the inconsistency has always been, and will be to the last. All the same, I am going to look into it.

A commonplace (I suppose) is something which a very great number of human beings have felt, and which a considerable number have said. So, at this stage in the world's history, anything that is true is likely to be a commonplace: human experience has been pretty well exhausted. And thinking of the *Better Away*, let us begin with simple things, which we can all understand. One sits down in an easy chair on a winter night beside the warm and cheerful fire, in the room where one has gone through much work. Your books are all around you, gleaming pleasantly in firelight and lamplight. There is not one of them but cost you some thought whether you could afford it before you bought it: though I do

not think you ever repented buying a book. And then one thinks, specially when the years behind have grown many, one must go away from all these things ; go away and never come back to them. When one is carried out from one's door, it is perfectly certain, whatever may happen elsewhere, that you never will enter it any more. This cannot be said too strongly, or too often ; in any case, Shakespeare thought so. 'Thou'l come no more. Never, never, never, never, never !' One is not enthusiastically attached to this life : but one has got very much accustomed to it. All the familiar things must be left. You may remember the awful description Mrs. Oliphant gives of an æsthetic idler dying : 'I have not the least idea what I am going to : ' I am not sure of the words, but that was the idea. What many people have a clearer thought of is, as Fielding put it, that 'this little chamber will be exchanged for a worse-furnished box : ' and the rain will fall heavy and the wind howl strangely on a dark winter night over one's grave. Very great and good folk have thought of just that, and in any case not *said* they were looking farther on ; yet declared they were attracted by the prospect. It may suffice to recall one of the grandest passages in all poetry, which relates the wish of a certain Job ; and which some people would admire more and read oftener if it did not occur in the particular Volume which contains it. Yet one remembers, too, how Charles Lamb, though he never had much of this life, yet clung to the little he had and put away the thought of leaving it.

There are cases in which, for the purposes of art, there is but the one way. Little Nell had to die. So had little Paul Dombey. They were too good for this world. It was impossible even to admit the idea of letting them down from that elevation to a

prosaic living happily ever after. And you may find strong proof how deep-set in human nature is the conviction of the more ethereal altitude of a celibate life, in the fact that to have made Nell grow strong, be married, and have twelve children, would have cast a certain absurdity over the angelic and supernal grace of her childish days. It may here be said, too, that as one grows old, the making all stories which end happily end in marriage, seems to found on as childish an illusion as the belief in pixies and fairy-rings. Cannot some bold romancer strike out some other ending which shall satisfy the heart, yet deliver us from as unreal a conventionality as the two or three notes with which operatic songs almost always end, or the three awful bangs which conclude an overture ?

One shrinks, it was said, with an instinctive shrinking, from the first-meeting idea of exchanging the warmth and light of the pleasant fireside for a locality which must needs be very cold and dark: never fully realising that what of us will be in that locality will not care at all about cold and darkness. But one has sometimes thought that the human shrinking from the suggestion that one is Better Away is yet more emphatic, looking forward to the day when one shall have been gone ten years and is practically forgot. I fear we are all so selfish that it would be a pang to go back after a little while, and find how very seldom we are missed. Ah, you who went from bitter tears and hearts broken at parting stay where you are (wherever it be) and remember these things: Do not go back ! Apparently it is not possible that you should: and the arrangement is wise and considerate. I have passed through the loveliest scenery on a magnificent summer evening with one I know. The glowing green, the sapphire sky, the flood of sunshine, how we both enjoyed them: and how beautiful, with a heavenly

beauty, all the world seemed ! But I thought of one, gone for years from his home : never forgotten : yet somehow seeming but a poor faded shadow in that hour of miraculous gleam and glow : and I was very sorry for her. No doubt, if one could have seen her in that moment, it would have appeared that she was not sorry for herself. And in a keener degree, when one has beheld a handsome young widow singing with vehemence a sentimental song, not a trace of the weeds of bereavement left about her, and surrounded by the assiduities of men not unaware of the fortune attached to an attractive personality, one has felt a profound sympathy for the poor husband who is so completely blotted out, and been aware that one would not by any means like to be in his place. So is our feeling ruled by illusions.

*Better Away*, is the thought of this page. Is it better for one's self ? or better for other people ? There are homely ways of putting this latter alternative. There comes back to me, just in this moment, with a startling distinctness, a sentence said in my hearing when I was a little boy : of course it was not said to me. I behold a very shrewd old Scotch face. I hear a loud voice which speaks with a strong Scotch accent. The subject of conversation is a family of pretty girls, now in wealthy circumstances and well-educated, struggling for greater social consideration in a certain community, but not struggling with entire success. ' If they could get old John under the moulds it would be better for them : ' such were the words. The poor old father, through whose industry wealth and culture came, must be got rid of. I daresay he often thought as much himself, with a sorrowful heart : and in any case, he speedily departed. If you, or I, my reader, had been old John, the judgment, though sound, would have been painful to hear.

It is a sad thing to be aware that one is an encumbrance, a hindrance, to those for whom you have done everything and practised stern self-denial. To be bluntly told one is not wanted, however true it may be, is a trial. But cases may be supposed in which it would be a heart-break.

We have been thinking of instances in which it is the parent that must be got rid of. We have known instances in which it was the child. And in a sorrowful world, there is not a sadder possibility. Just two days since, walking with a friend by a very gloomy summer sea, on a very dark June evening, I listened to an awful story of the incorrigible badness of a young man who was dragging an honoured name through the mire. I said, 'But what will they do with him?' The answer was, 'Oh, he'll have to be *Shipped*.' Though the phrase was new, the imagery was expressive, and one was aware what was meant. Ah, get the black sheep out of sight, somewhere beyond the great sea! Some people take it quite easily, out of sight being with them out of mind. Or, as the schoolman said, *De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio*. They are able to forget that the shipped one lives on still, though far away. Out of sight, with them, is tantamount to having ceased to be. I suppose we have all some vague feeling that when a human being goes out of your door, or turns the corner of the street and passes out of sight, he disappears wholly: in any case that there is a marked break in his life. Ah, to the man that lives, life is continuous: whatever it may be to those that look at him and think of him: your brother is your brother still, though starving on the streets of Frisco. And to say it serves him exactly right is not much comfort. All that can be said is, that the Shipped black sheep goes to destruction where it does not so conspicuously disgrace those at home. Like-

wise, that when there is a dinner-party at home, it is not quite so real that he is cold and hungry in Colorado as if he were so in the street before your windows, and in hearing of your hospitalities. All the same, I used to wonder how some fathers and sisters manage to live at all, knowing the facts I know. I wonder still. Has it come to this, that the best you can desire is quite to forget the bright little boy whose childish ways bring the tears to your eyes when you remember them : who is dead, utterly, in the sudden hulking scamp whom you dare not hope to see again in this world or in any other ? It is a bitter world to many : but one might find heart to bear nearly anything but that.

Let such thoughts be put away. Let us go rather to the less painful prospect of getting away one's self. There are moods in which that prospect is continually before us : and it is best to look straight at it. One wonders some little of the weariness of the old pauper woman, who, being set before the guardians of the poor, and asked if she was indeed a hundred years old, burst out, 'God knows whether I am or not, gentlemen, but I feel a thousand !' Everybody who has passed middle age and had to work hard sometimes feels even more. John Knox was a very strong man, and anything but fanciful or sentimental. Neither did he live to be very old. Yet on a certain summer day he departed from this place where I write to another where he hoped quietly to die, and in fact did so ; 'desiring that I may end my battel : for as the world is wearie of me, so am I of it.' The time comes at which, in all good faith, and in perfect calmness, you feel you have had enough of it. You are satiated. I suppose you may be aware that you have had enough of life, just as you are aware you have had enough of dinner. It is a matter of reasoning. Simply you feel it so.

The daughter of Charles Dickens spoke of the one who had gone: and though the loss to her was unspeakable, and he too was still brightly enjoying this life, she said he was Better Away. . . .

I remember well, when a boy, an old gentleman engaged in a business in which he had made a large fortune, who used to worry one when asked to do anything by saying to himself even as he addressed himself to do it, *So tired*. One felt no sympathy whatsoever with that over-wearied yet most successful man. It seemed a piece of affectation and pretence. Gradually you come to understand the thing, and to know that it is a sorrowful reality. And where wealth and success have not come, the weariness is greater; though possibly borne with no complaint. I have heard of a little boy, who being told to go and ask his overburdened father to do something for him, replied, 'I don't like to go. He always does what I ask him, but *he moans*.' He was but a very little boy: but hearing that inarticulate complaint, like that of an overladen camel, he felt that there was something amiss, and he shrank from laying anything more on one whose load was too great already. But the little boy was too sympathetic for this world: others beyond reckoning would never mind the moaning at all, so they got what they wanted. . . . Coming down to physical discomforts and disabilities, there are men who would say, Things are so bad as concerns teeth, digestion, lameness, gout, that really one is far better out of it all. And when the gripe of pain is at its savagest, it comes to poor Frederick Robertson's cry, 'I cannot bear it; let me rest.' It comes to the anguished Mirabeau's entreaty for something to make him unconscious of agony: *Dormir!* He could not speak: but he wrote the one word. Less tragic, less urgent, but as real, is the desolate sense in many, I

am such a crazy, rickety machine, in body and mind, that I am no good to anybody: and I am much better out of the way. You can think of some poor creature, toiling at his desk with bleeding lungs to write wit to earn his children bread, and driven half distracted by any sound that jarred the shaken nerves,—knowing how the little boys must be hushed by the care-worn mother into an unnatural stillness, yet hearing sometimes the laugh that showed the elasticity of the childish heart amid even such unnatural surroundings,—as saying to himself, in all seriousness, 'Now I have such an uneasy, anxious temperament, that it is not fit I should stay to overcloud these bright young lives. They are afraid to speak to me when I am locked into my room, in the dark hour of excessive toil, or the darker hour of going over my accounts, and scheming how I may pay my way. If I could but leave them and their poor mother in any decent measure provided for, I should be thankful to get away.'

Without quite coming down to that, the *Better Away* will oppress even a cheerful and hopeful mind, growing old, when the conviction comes that there is no hope of doing any better work than one has done already: possibly of doing any good work at all.

I do not know whether Gray's *Elegy* is known to all readers in these days as it used to be when it was in all school-books. It has passed from these now, giving place (in some cases) to very transient rubbish. Still, it is a poem to which one refers, without quoting it. And we may hope that everybody knows the famous verse, in which he suggests that nobody ever goes quite willingly away from 'this pleasing, anxious being.' But it is ever to be remembered that Gray was a bachelor. He lived in quiet College rooms. He knew nothing of the cares of house-keeping. His

income was always ample. Above all, he knew nothing of the upbringing of children : the cost of garments and little shoes and schooling : the development of the independent will as years go on : the occasional choice of evil rather than good : the awful black sheep : the little household scattered over the wide world. He did not know how heavy the burden grows, how rent the interests, how weak the heart, how desponding the sense that you can do nothing, towards the end. None are so tired out, as men and women who have had the inestimable treasure yet the unspeakable anxiety of many children. And after all, the great thing that makes human beings feel they are Better Away is the sense of being quite worn out. When one was young, one used to think that old people, specially those in conspicuous places, ought to have been dead long ago. You wondered they had the face to stay here so long : like Mr. Outram's old woman to whom he had sold an annuity, and who, impiously as he thought, persisted in far out-living the scriptural measure of human years. But when one is young no longer, one's views on this subject change. It is not even the sense that we ought to yield our places to others, and give them their turn, that weighs with us. It is the sense that one is wearied, and fain would sleep. One has no longer heart for the struggle and the race : let us slip away.

I am not sure that wearied folk, thinking it quite time to go, think much of where they are going, or what they are to be. I believe that when people wish themselves away, they think the great change an End, a Cessation. They do not clearly take in that it is a beginning. Mrs. Fanny Kemble said, wisely, to a poor girl who said she was so worn out that she sometimes thought of killing herself, 'Don't do that. It would be running away from school : and you may

find yourself set to harder tasks where you would go.' 'I never thought of that,' said the poor girl, with a startled look. It was an alarming counsel, had he literally meant it, which an expiring parson of the last generation addressed to his weeping wife at the very last. They had dwelt together for very many years: and parting seemed impossible. 'I'll die and go with you,' the poor wife said. But the cautious old Scotsman replied, 'Bide where ye are, woman: ye're far better where ye are.' Severely interpreted, the words gave but a blank account of the place where he must go: for even poor Uncle Tom knew that *Heaven is better than Kentuck*: and most would hope that it is many degrees better than Fife. All the good man really intended was to check what savoured of the heroic and extravagant, and to convey that God's time and way were best. I do not know how it may be in the region where you dwell, friendly reader: but in my own little experience the use has been to speak of the unseen world as of course a great deal better than this. Whosoever goes from this world to that has of course gained by the exchange. I look back, over many years, to the day on which a good old grandmother spoke to me with firm faith of an ill-behaved lad who had died: and who assuredly would have needed to be greatly changed before he could be fit for saintly society: 'It's just a month to-day,' were her words, 'since my poor boy went to glory.' It seemed, in one's early days, that such a fashion of speech was no more than the keeping up of a kindly fiction: as when in a public assembly one heard Mr. Smith speak of an aged member of it as *our venerable father*, whom a few minutes before he had in private described as *that obstructive old idiot*. But some of us humbly cherish a hope now, which in those days one durst not have expressed; and read the burial service

with a lowly trust over those who while here were very odd Christians.

Who was it that said to me, with a sorrowful face, these strange words : *Nearly every married man of limited means above fifty years of age is broken-hearted !*

## XIX.

### OF A WILFUL MEMORY.

IT was judiciously remarked by Mr. Carlyle (possibly on more than one occasion), that a man in a fever is not a strong man, though it may take six other men to hold him. For the poor patient's energy is not available to any good end: is not under control at all. Even so, I fear a memory cannot justly be called a good memory though it retain a vast amount of heterogeneous material, if it act capriciously, and at its own will: absolutely rejecting (let us say) the innumerable sermons one has heard, and treasuring up preposterous *Sonnets from the Afghane*.

Various saintly persons, and some to whom that adjective is in a lesser degree applicable, have stated that the present writer has a great memory. The statement is true under the serious reservation which has been indicated. Anything useless: anything odd: innumerable small incidents forty years old, whose history could in no way be helpful to any human being: glimpses of nature, seen in summer or winter, in his beautiful country parish, or on a bleak beach unvisited through the life of a human generation: the look on a face in no way attractive, the face of one he did not in the least care for: ill-natured and stupid speeches made in an unmusical voice: all these, and things innumerable more, often press upon him in a

way that frightens : that revives as though it had happened within this hour something which befell when he was five years old. Long ago, an old gentleman (as I then thought him), long departed, said in my hearing that he 'was astonished at his own judgment': he found himself so incredibly wise. I remember, vividly, that at the moment I esteemed the remark an injudicious one. But, in all sober earnest, I know people who are frightened at their own memory : so awfully vivid : so mighty to make past things live again which they would give much to forget. It appears to me that the punishment of past foolishness must be eternal : unless there be Lethe somewhere.

I am not to permit myself to fall into too serious a line of thought. All this has been pressed upon me by the fact that certain lines have for two days kept ringing in my brain which I had absolutely forgotten : which I read in a London newspaper before I was ten years old, and never once have thought of since : and which are absolutely stupid. In those remote days, it was deemed jocular to print passages in Cockney language : and now, as I shut my eyes, I see the newspaper : it was called the *Sunday Times*, though it came regularly to a house where no mortal would have read a newspaper on a Sunday. I think it may exorcise the intruding poem if I give it here. I will give it, letter-perfect : and I do not believe another member of the human race remembers it. It was addressed to Mr. Green's famous balloon :—

Great Gawky, wonder of the hupper skies,  
Oh how I loves to see yer body rise !  
There's lots of fear, although they tries to mask it,  
As they hangs dangling in a wicker basket.  
For me, wheneer I takes a hariel ride,  
I means to book a place hin the hinside :  
And, mounting huppards to the hupper skies,  
I shant feel giddy :—'cos I'll shet both hies !

Courteous reader, what do you say to a memory that of a sudden, and that continually, recalls, and urgently presses on one's attention, such material as that? Could you lay your hand on your heart, and say it was a good memory? At this moment, I put in that passage about hand and heart, because suddenly the face of an aged lady presented itself before me, and I heard her voice say, 'I should just like to ask Sir James to lay his hand on his heart, and say he has used me properly.' This important incident occurred when I was not seven years old.

As the subject is poetry, there comes to my remembrance a poem, written long ago, by a most eminent man whose reputation was rather in science than in polite literature. Not but what he wrote prose most eloquently and gracefully. Furthermore, when the writer was a youth, that illustrious man proved to him a specially kind friend. Few there are who know that Sir David Brewster, once Principal of St. Salvator's College, St. Andrews, and then of the University of Edinburgh, had ever soared into poetry. I believe he did so but once. But his poem is worthy of preservation. It is brief: but its construction is very remarkable. Five lines: each line containing but two syllables: but they rhyme with an entire perfection never elsewhere reached. They were a birthday tribute to a sweet young girl whose name was Phoebe: who, if she lives, must be an old lady now. They are highly complimentary to that attractive personality: and then they pass, with simple pathos, to contrast her early youth with the poet's advanced age. Here they are:—

Phoebe,  
Ye be  
Hebe!  
We be  
D. B.!

It appears to me that a high level of excellence is reached in this remarkable composition. No accusation of plagiarism can possibly arise here. I do not believe that any poem, in any close degree resembling this, was ever written since the days of Jubal himself. And if he wrote anything like this, it has not been handed down. It may be objected that Jubal wrote in a language not susceptible of this treatment. It is not so. As dear Bishop Wordsworth used to say, talking of something awfully difficult in Greek versification, 'There is a way to do it, if you can find it out.' And I knew, with many others, a miraculous Hebrew scholar, who translated into Hebrew the well-known Scotch song, 'Hame cam' our gude man at e'en, And hame cam' he' : retaining the exact rhythm and giving rhymes. I fancy this was the most extraordinary effort ever made in the way of translation.

As these last words are written, they suggest something quite unlike them : by a sudden association transcending that by which a crowd of schoolboys playing in the snow suggested to Douglas Jerrold Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures. The snowballs filled the air : the boys shouted : and in that instant Job Caudle and his famous wife burst complete on their author's view.

Dr. Black, minister of the Barony church at Glasgow before Norman Macleod, used to ask students to dine with him in a very kind way. Once I was there, a lad at College. Dr. Black was talking of the difficulty of persuading eminent preachers to give one a sermon : for that matter, preachers of no great eminence. He and another Glasgow minister, having a holiday in Cumberland, found there was a little Scotch kirk near : and on a Sunday morning came to service rather late, and got into a remote corner of the little building. But the eagle eye of the minister spotted them : and

in the intercessory prayers he so expressed himself as to make quite sure of some aid from them. For the good man's words were these (I hear Dr. Black's voice uttering them in this moment) : 'Lord, have mercy on Thy ministering servants, who have popped in upon us so unexpectedly : one of whom will preach in the afternoon, and the other in the evening.'

It was impossible to put the Scot, an exile in remote England, in the painful position of having made a mis-statement : wherefore they did preach. I have known the like expedient successful, when employed by a very little boy. His grandfather said to him that it was impossible to take him out in the carriage for a drive that day. 'Then,' said the artful child, 'you'll have made me tell a lie, for I told Robert' (the coachman) 'that I was going with you.' The little boy was a very engaging boy, and the grandfather just about the very best of men. So the result was quite certain.

In a Church where the prayers are made at the discretion of the minister, very strange intercessions are sometimes presented. I remember well, ages since, hearing old Dr. Muir of Glasgow, who was a real though eccentric genius in his day, and of whom no English reader ever heard, relate an incident which had been in his own knowledge. 'Mr. Smith was preaching at Drumsleekie : and he had come to the concluding prayer, where we pray for all and sundries (*sic*) : when he suddenly remembered that he had forgotten to pray for the magistrates. So he put in the prayer just where he was. *Have mercy upon all fools and idiots, and specially upon the magistrates of Drumsleekie.* He meant no evil, but the magistrates were not pleased.'

This at any rate was not so bad as when a vulgar puritan, uttering a discourse which he presumably

thought was a prayer, thus expressed himself: *Have mercy on that miserable man, who was lately pouring forth blasphemies against Thee.* It was at a 'Sabbath-observance' meeting. The miserable man was the Roman Catholic Archbishop, a peaceful and devout cleric: and the blasphemy consisted in stating that in his judgment there was no harm in taking a quiet walk in the Botanic Garden at Edinburgh on a Sunday afternoon. This awful supplication was uttered, within my own knowledge, less than thirty years ago. I fancy that my reader will have no difficulty in deciding which individual was 'the miserable man.'

The same Dr. Muir, on the same occasion (it was at a dinner-table) related a curious story. I was a young student of divinity, doubtless asked to fill a vacant place: Norman Macleod sat next me, and listened to Dr. Muir earnestly. Dr. Muir was a very great friend of Dr. Chalmers. I can give the words.

'Dr. Chalmers told me that he just once went to hear the chief preacher of the Auld-Licht. He was there in good time: he was put into the Elders' Seat. It was a terribly bare little building. The Elders were a grim set. They kept their bonnets on their heads till the minister entered: and they had each a large stick in his hand, which they used for chappin' their noses through all the service. The minister wore no gown nor bands. He gave a very long sermon, full of sound divinity, but without the smallest practical application, and without a vestige of feeling. At length Dr. Chalmers got out, the dismal worship being ended. And his word was, If these people ever get to Heaven, they will live on the North side of it.'

This unutterably-dreary dissertation in Calvinistic theology, without the remotest bearing upon actual life, and listened to not with any idea of receiving instruction but with a sharp suspicious watch lest there should

be anything unsound, or anything 'wanting' (such was the cant phrase), was the only part of the awful worship which was held of any account. The prayers were 'the preleminaries': they were listened to, but not joined in. The Lord's Prayer was unsound. It was not a Christian prayer: and it was 'a form.' Holy scripture was never read. There was little singing, and that of a horrible character. Good old Dr. Paul of St. Cuthbert's used to tell how the first Italian music-master who came to Edinburgh (it was when Dr. Paul was a boy) being a Roman Catholic had no place then where to worship on Sundays with his fellows: and used to wander sadly about the streets on Sundays. One day he was passing the Tron Church, as the service was drawing to a close. The Beadle came to open the outer door, so that nothing might impede the rush of the congregation the moment the last Amen was said (by the minister only). The lonely Italian drew near the door, and was startled. He said to the Beadle, 'What is that horrible noise I hear?' The Beadle, much scandalised, answered, 'That's the people praising God.' 'Do the people think their God likes to hear that horrible noise?' 'To be sure: of course He does.' The sad foreigner rejoined, 'Then their God must have no ear for music': and sorrowfully shaking his head he walked away. But indeed, within these twenty years, a worthy man who left many thousands to the Kirk, and has his portrait hung up in a sort of shabby Valhalla, came to worship regularly in the parish church of St. Andrews. He found with consternation that there was a good deal of music. And he made his complaint to the minister of the parish whence he came. He told, with extreme condemnation, of our psalms, hymns, and canticles: and added, with intense bitterness, 'Now I put it to you, if that's not just an

aff-puttin' of time ! ' The notion that the praise was the worship of the congregation had never entered the good man's head. It was something done to give the minister a rest. And indeed there have been vociferous preachers who would run themselves out of breath, and then interject two or three verses to be sung till they should be able to be ' at it again.'

A bright young parson, too early taken, told me he had hardly ever seen a country congregation more thrilled through, than when an admirable pulpit-orator was depicting the probable upshot of a graceless life. He said many things, which cannot be recorded here. But he summed-up in a never-forgotten sentence : which the young parson repeated with a voice choked with emotion :—

*And the end of that man is the Ropp, the Rahzor, or the Ruvver !*

Once, in my boyhood, I heard that orator : only once. The hush was startling as he repeated, many times, ' But there was no room in the Inn for poor Mary.' Each of these last two words was pathetically and musically lengthened out in a fashion almost incredible : reminding one of the miraculously-prolonged notes of the silvery bells of Antwerp Cathedral. With real pathos, and unmistakable effect, the orator painted in a realistic way the straits of the Blessed Virgin. It did not equally carry sympathy when he passed to denunciation. He stated that in consideration of room not being provided for One of whose personality the poor inn-people knew nothing whatever, the Almighty would have been justified in sending down an avenging force, and burning up the inn and all the people in it : likewise all the inhabitants of little Bethlehem ; and furthermore all the country for many miles round, with the unoffending children and other inhabitants. He went on, I hear him now,

‘ Trusting that such are your sentiments, I now proceed to something else. Though I was a little fellow, a trifle would have made me get up and shriek out, ‘ These are not my sentiments at all. It would be an abominable shame ! ’

The dear man, long gone to his rest, did not really take in the meaning of what he was saying. Not any more than many rude souls who use regrettable language : ‘ half-ignorant,’ like the Brothers in Keats’s exquisite verse. And this brings to me the distant day on which a saintly patriarch, set in charge of a little seaport, spoke of the fashion in which his soul was vexed by the sailors’ communications to one another. Their parts of speech were sad to hear. ‘ Ah,’ said the preacher, in solemn tones, ‘ the fearful Nouns, the appalling Adjectives, and the tremendous (*sic*) Verbs, one hears down at the Harbour ! ’ I fear me much that this witness was too true. But the sailors did not mean it : any more than the Council of Trent designed its frequent *Anathema sit* to be taken literally. Tulloch was greatly touched when I pointed out to him that the words ought not to be translated *Let him be accursed*. They ought merely to be rendered, innocuously vilipending, *He be blowed*.

With the mention of the dear name of Tulloch, an odd remembrance revives. He was the Kirk’s first Croall Lecturer : getting four hundred pounds for six lectures which did not cost him a great deal of trouble. His subject was Sin. The volume was published by our eminent firm in George Street, the Blackwoods. It sold well. But a chief authority told me one day, as I sat in ‘ The Old Saloon,’ that it sounded odd when a message-boy came in from a retail bookseller, exclaiming, ‘ Gie us six Tulloch’s Sins ! ’

It was not a Bishop, but only a Bishop’s son, who appeared much aggrieved by a statement once made

by the friend we miss continually. Surely humour was lacking in that dutiful man, who would stand up for his father when not attacked at all. But indeed the Principal stated, with much gravity, that a lady had given him a beautiful penknife, which he valued highly. One day, in the Athenæum, he laid it down on a writing-table, and going elsewhere lost sight of it for a few minutes. When he returned to recover it, it had vanished: and Tulloch never saw it more. But the terrible thing was, that no mortal had been near that fatal table save five or six Bishops. Here the Principal paused: and after the manner of the great orators he left his hearers to complete the sense. A pause followed. And Tulloch resumed. 'It is very sad to say that the person who had been nearest my knife was the Archbishop of Canterbury.'

The little ways of departed friends are infinitely touching to me. Tulloch told me that when writing to a friend in St. Andrews, even from Edinburgh thirty miles off, he always wrote *St. Andrews, Fife*. One thought of Dickens, and the never-failing *Rochester, Kent*. There is but one Rochester in England: while there is a lesser St. Andrews even in Scotland, and several places beyond the Atlantic bear the name. Yet Dickens was quietly persistent, when told the additional word was needless. Stanley's unvarying *St. Andrews, N.B.*, has taken a letter to New Brunswick. A letter addressed from Birmingham to *St. Andrews* only, went to the incumbent of St. Andrew's parish in that city. And Plumptre used to complain that a communication to *The Deanery, Wells*, often went to Wells in Norfolk, where is no *Deanery*. The caution of the lovable Double-First was, 'Mind, in writing to me, always *Wells, Somerset*.'

The most invidious mention of this city was at a large religious meeting held in a town whose name

I vividly remember. There was a great hall : and two or three thousand good folk were gathered in it who apparently deemed themselves better than other people. Requests were being made that divers souls, supposed to be in evil case, should be interceded for. One arose, and asked the prayers of the meeting for a little town on the East coast of Scotland, which was 'wholly given to idolatry.' Such was the expression. A little city, with many schools, also the seat of a University. Having thus mysteriously indicated the place, the excellent individual plainly felt that no mortal could possibly guess what place was meant : and putting his hand over his mouth, he said to his friends on the platform, in a hoarse whisper distinctly heard over the entire hall,—*St. Andrews!* Being very seriously concerned in the moral estate of that city, I confess to have been somewhat startled when I heard the tale. For, so far from esteeming St. Andrews as worse than other towns, I was strongly convinced that it was even a good deal better than most of them.

Quite recently prayer was being offered in a certain large gathering for something which may be good, or may not. I have a clear opinion on that point : but that is of no consequence. As certain words were uttered, a good man, deeply sympathising with the sentiment, loudly exclaimed *Hear, hear!* With many more I was much disgusted. But I was also considerably perplexed. *Who* was it that the wild enthusiast desired to move to closer attention ? Who is generally understood, in Christian assemblies, to be the Hearer of Prayer ? The incident appeared to me a very awful one.

A pleasanter remembrance of that exclamation comes. A poet and a genius, whom the writer seldom sees but holds in warm affection, was once speaking

of the preposterous and idiotic fashion of Scotland whereby the minister in the Kirk having finished his prayer, adds the *Amen*, the congregation keeping dead silence. ‘Why,’ said that man, enlightened beynd his surroundings, ‘for a man to say *Amen* to his own prayer is just as if he were to say *Hear hear* to his own speech !’ Though not more idiotic, it is in fact a great deal worse. For if the speaker did thus call attention to the sentiment he uttered, he would at least not be putting himself in stupid and cantankerous contrariety to the old and good way of Christian people from the first until now. But the unhappy thing here is, that many worthy folk are in the belief that they are following the order of Christendom, when they are vehemently contending for some ugly and stupid fashion which is unknown save in an unappreciable fraction of the Church Catholic. An excellent old lady, listening at eighty years to the familiar chanting of the psalms for the very first time in her life, stated to me that ‘it was a kind of lilt.’ As for a certain hymn, well-known outside of Scotland as the *Te Deum*, it was ‘just like the quackin’ of ducks.’ A minister who at length succeeded in getting made a ‘Charity’ D.D., told me that the *Te Deum* was utterly unfit for public worship: forasmuch as it led one over such a number of subjects as ‘to leave the mind quite bemuddled.’ In this Scottish parish, I am thankful to say that we have sung that grandest of uninspired hymns every Sunday for near nineteen years: and until now our minds are no more bemuddled than before we began that pleasant conformity to Catholic order.

Still, the opinion of all the people among whom you live has an awful weight. You remember the poor M.A. who was constrained to declare that ‘the world is as flat as a pancake.’ Happily, the general

consensus sometimes leads one right. It was touching, when a rustic seeking baptism for his child, was questioned by the parish minister on matters more elementary than seem needful. 'But how do you know there is a God?' The homely answer was, 'It's the clash o' the kintra': which means the belief of everyone he knew. The poor man was quite right. It is not every human being who is called to 'prove all things.'

I do not know that among the many visitors to this place we have ever had one more interesting than a man whose face suddenly looks wistfully at me, though he is some hundreds of miles away. Twice has William Ernest Henley come to St. Andrews, each time for two or three days: twice I have met him and talked with him elsewhere. He is little more than forty, but he looks much older. Few of a suffering race have had to bear what Henley has gone through: and I never knew a sufferer bear his burden more heroically. His volume, called *A Book of Verses*, was published in the summer of 1888, and it came very straight to many hearts. The first part of it, 'In Hospital: Rhymes and Rhythms,' has an awful realistic power. *Quorum pars magna fui* is nothing, to express the sombre and terrible truth here. But there is far more in Mr. Henley's verse than the uttering of a most exceptional experience. If there be such a thing at all as the *ipsissima* poetic inspiration, the incommunicable spark, you have it continually there. I durst not try to read uncounted lines aloud, from that pen. *The Song of the Sword* has come this year of '92: in the summer of '90 there was a remarkable volume of prose, *Views and Reviews*. The prose is admirable: but many write prose well in these days. And the views set forth are often exceptional: an unfriendly critic would say crotchety: they are vitally

their author's own. It is the verse which is unapproached, in its own way, by any: it sets its writer on high. Here is a Poet: there can be no question about that.

Mr. Henley was brought to Edinburgh to edit what was at first called the *Scots Observer*; but in a little the headquarters were moved to London: it is the *National Observer* now. When he first came to this place, it was in company with the writer's dear and tried friend Charles Baxter, to whom Louis Stevenson has dedicated two of his books: a distinction of such a kind has seldom befallen an Edinburgh W.S. One evening the friends dined here: and Henley left on one's mind the impression of a very singular individuality. He was most interesting, and indeed charming: but he was quite unlike anybody else one knew. His whole heart was in his paper, then just started: and I remember the eagerness with which he carried off, for study at home, one of the earliest volumes of the *Saturday Review*. I bound that periodical for many years: in divinity calf with red edges: I wonder if any other human being ever did the like. But when a distinguished Professor died, and at the sale of his library twenty-three bound volumes of the trenchant paper went for eighteen shillings, I ceased to bind it. And practically, the volumes are very rarely opened: any more than the volumes of a monthly magazine. Thirty years since I had a friend who possessed *Fraser* from the first number. Though the volumes were curious, and interesting, they took up much space and they were dusty: and my friend would willingly have given them to any one who would have carried them away.

In reading much of Mr. Henley's verse, one feels that there is something terrible about a man who resolutely tells the truth: utterly ignoring what we poor

souls wish were true. There are those who will relate an old church legend for its pathetic beauty, not minding that indeed it is not true: touched by it just as much as though it were true: even as the man whose faith failed him till he was sure of nothing still delighted in the hymns which he loved of old: moved as in past years by *Rock of Ages* though not believing there was any Rock of Ages at all.

On this page I am yielding to inexplicable associations, as did Mrs. Nickleby herself: wherefore let it be said that the wilful memory, as the last sentence was written, brought back vividly a day left forty years behind: if one may vary Wordsworth. Coming out of Keswick on the top of a coach bound for Penrith, and crowded with tourists, the coachman pointed to a white house on the hill with his whip, and uttered the enigmatic words, 'That's where Towser lived.' 'Who was Towser?' 'Oh, Towser that wrote books.' A traveller mildly said, 'I think you must mean Southey.' 'Well,' said the driver, in a loud and indignant tone, 'Southey, or Towser, or something of that kind: I don't care.' Such is fame. It had been different two days before, driving from Bowness by Thirlmere to Keswick: now enjoying the privilege of a box-seat. Passing by Rydal, the question was put, 'Did you know Mr. Wordsworth?' 'Oh, yes, I knew old Wordsworth very well: he was very fond of the box-seat was old Wordsworth.' I am not sure that the coachman was personally very familiar with the great poet's works: but he was extremely well aware that 'old Wordsworth' was esteemed by many as a very great man. Familiarity had not diminished reverence. There is a simple-minded conviction with many that it is impossible any one well known to them can be a person of high eminence. That conviction was clearly expressed

in my hearing when I was a lad at College. I had said, in the hearing of an old lady whose brother had been a St. Andrews Professor, something implying that Chalmers was a great man. Her niece, a young woman, sat by. The startling words came, 'Ye need not say this in this house ! Jessie there has sat far too often on Dr. Chalmers's knee to think him a great man.' I was struck dumb. And the good old lady, going back to the estimate of a remote day, summed up with the exclamation, 'Daft Tam Chalmers !'

As she closed, a voice, stilled for a generation, went on: not addressing me: not speaking of Chalmers. 'Yes, he was a good man: an excellent good man. Only you could not believe anything he said.' That was his only weakness. And his divagations from truth were always in the way of exaggeration. And his very name was appropriate. It was brought in nicely in a little poem about him. Here it is:—

You Double each story you tell :  
You Double each sight that you see :  
Your name's Double-U E Double-L,  
Double-U Double-O D !

For the old gentleman's name had been *Wellwood*. The thing was a little awkward. We were in the beautiful dwelling of a delightful old man kind to me in my youth: and who was pretty near the incarnation of absolute truthfulness: hating even playful colouring up. And his Christian name was Wellwood!—'I trust,' said he, with just a tinge of asperity, 'that it does not follow that all who bear the name are to take that line?' Many disclaimers instantly followed. It was he, that dear old gentleman, who when on a bright summer morning walking with him under his fine trees, and seeing the grass golden under the sun of July I said to him, 'What a lovely place

you have here ! ' replied with a sigh, ' Yes, if you could have a nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine years' lease of it ! ' And silence fell upon us. It would not do to have to go away. North of the Tweed, such a lease means for ever. Two brothers, kindly devoted to one another as the Cheerybles, abode together in that sylvan home : and I was the young parish minister. I blushed, I did indeed, when the venerable man in a meeting of the parishioners once said, ' We're all just a pleasant family : and *that's* the head of it.' Little fit, indeed. And, as plain fact, the head of all of us was hard by : and he governed us paternally for our good. I went back, years after I was no longer a country parson, to that beautiful region : one brother had departed, and the elder of the two was left. I see the kind, yet firm face, as he held my hand a space, and looked at me intently ere we parted for this life. And I do not think that when Alexander was gone, Wellwood desired that long lease any more. Long since reunited : where things are better by far. ' Heaven is better than Kentuck,' was the word of Uncle Tom. And Paradise is better than the sweetest spot in unforgotten Kirkpatrick-Irongray.

Did the ingenuous reader ever receive a letter from a total stranger, stating that the stranger wanted £60 to pay a lawyer's bill incurred through pure wrongheadedness, and requesting the reader to send that sum by post ? Such a letter came to me a little while ago. And it was not a bad joke : it was very serious earnest. The stranger lived some hundreds of miles away, but still in Scotland. He appeared to think I combined unlimited wealth with extreme simplicity. Modest as the livings of the Kirk are, there are those who fancy the clergy of Scotland are very rich. I hear, to-day, a very astute old farmer

say (thirty-five years ago) 'We know that the ministers are full of money.' It was the only time I ever heard the phrase. And I remembered how Charles Lamb had said that Coleridge was 'full of fun.' But that is quite a different condition. And in these days of terribly reduced stipends, which appear unlikely ever to increase, there is not much fun in rectory, vicarage, or manse.

Another bit of clerical experience. I have a friend, a parson, the incumbent of a Scottish parish. He is a very decided churchman, and has distinct views as to schism. Accordingly, fighting against his natural tendency, he determined to be wonderfully friendly with nonconformists. One morning, going to church, he met the dissenting minister going to his place of worship. The representative of the National Establishment held out his hand to the Anti-State churchman: and said, 'I wish you a pleasant day's duty.' 'Ah, ah,' was the answer of the good separatist as he rapidly fled away. Upon this, my friend resolved that he would try whether it were possible to elicit a responsive good wish from the man unhappily divided. For seven successive Sunday mornings he took the worthy man's hand, uttering the like kind sentiment: but he never drew any friendly reply. For a day or two, with an astonished air, the response continued to be 'Ah, ah.' Then it appeared that a rejoinder had been meditated. It assumed the form, 'A cold morning.' 'Very cold indeed,' my friend sorrowfully subjoined. 'It was awkwardness,' I said to him as he told the story. 'Ah no: it was not,' and he sighed.

As these last words are written, a cloud descends upon the humble writer: the remembrance of a grievous disappointment. It never wholly passes away: sometimes it revives painfully. This Christ-

mas-eve brings it back : it fell upon a Christmas eve. At that period I was twelve years old. But the scene is vivid as ever.

Upon that day two schoolboys might have been seen leaning against the windows of the chief pastry-cook of a little Scottish town. No such tarts are now made by man as those that good man made. A wealthy farmer of the neighbourhood came up, and stopped when he reached us. Placing his right hand in his pocket, he rattled a vast amount (so it seemed to us) of coin ; and said, with a benevolent air, 'Boys, is there onything there tempin' you ?' By tempin', let the English reader understand, the worthy man meant to convey the notion of tantalising, or exciting the desire of enjoyment. 'Boys,' he repeated, 'is there onything tempin' you ?' With characteristic modesty we preserved silence : but a suppressed giggle and a rapid glance at the pocket made our feelings very manifest. Already, in fancy, were we enjoying the sustenance to be purchased with the liberal tip we made sure was coming. The good old man then said, 'Ah, boys, I see there's something tempin' you' : and again rattling his money in his pocket he walked off and was seen no more. Long since, that benevolent soul has gone where cheesecakes are not : but the incident dies not in the wilful memory. And now, when at times few and far between we revisit the schoolboy spot, and pass that corner, where new boys loiter as we loitered then, again I behold the puffy red face, and hear the wheezy voice say in apoplectic tones, 'I see, boys, there's something tempin' you.'

Of a sudden, I see a cheery face, of a man in middle age who in great incompetence held an elevation of about the dignity of a molehill. He was explaining to me (a lad) how great and influential he had been in a former sphere of uselessness. 'In fact,' said he,

‘I was Omnipotent in Little Peddlington !’ How pleased with himself the good man seemed ! I could but utter an inarticulate murmur, as of awe-stricken admiration. I was very young. And I have ever shrunk from giving offence.

The incident recalled another day, in a village among the hills. A little man, with a deep voice, who was what we call a ‘chapel-minister,’ found a workman painting the door of the place of worship without orders from himself. ‘Who told that to be done ?’ The answer was, ‘The Factor.’ Then came the dignified rejoinder, ‘A greater than the Factor is here !’

Graver thoughts come. A very clever and laborious man, the Professor of Divinity in a very great University (it has near 4000 students), said to me that he had been reading up some books of Roman theology upon the solemn subject of Purgatory. He was much impressed by the length of time for which it appeared some evil-doers would be detained there. ‘I wouldn’t want to be let out after thirty thousand years. I would be burnt a’ to bits !’

A Scotsman says *would* where an Englishman would say *should*.

Never did I see Stanley look more solemn than when speaking of the life beyond all that is here. Once, he told two or three of us, in this room, how some of Faraday’s friends began to speak lightly in his presence of what may be *There*. Finally, one of them, turning to the great man who was so happy in his simple faith said ‘What do you really expect you will find on the other side of death ? Will there be newspapers, and clubs, and dinner-parties ?’

In a moment, the smile passed from Faraday’s face, and with deep seriousness of expression and of voice, he answered :

*'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man—'*

Here Stanley's voice failed him. The beautiful little face was strange to see. And deep silence was in this room for a space.

In that inconceivably-remote age when the writer was a lad at Glasgow University, he sojourned for a space in the vicinity of a little Scotch town, in a lonely region. The inhabitants were incredibly pragmatical and self-sufficient. Our biggest Scotch preacher ministered one Sunday in the parish kirk. I said to an aged inhabitant, 'Well, what did you all think of Mr. Caird?' The answer was prompt. It was likewise idiotic. 'No much: we thought his sermons no very weel connekit.'

It may be feared that even such would be an austere reader's criticism of the present chapter. It matters not at all.

(1894.)

## XX.

### ARCHBISHOP TAIT OF CANTERBURY.\*

‘I NEVER liked Tait. I never could like him. And of course I differed from him on many subjects. But I will acknowledge that, during the years of his Primacy, there was no man in the Church of England, known to me, so fit to be Archbishop.’

I was not likely to forget the words ; nor any words seriously said by one so revered. It was a great event in the writer’s little history, to have a quiet talk with such a man. But I wrote down the words that evening and many more which will never be printed. For indeed they were of special interest. We were sitting in a quaint old room, in a quiet recess just out of the busiest roar of great London. I watched intently the worn fine features, with their expression of singular benignity and sweetness, as the words were said : said by one who might have been Archbishop of Canterbury himself had he chosen.

Then, in less grave mood : ‘Curious, his being so quiet and self-restrained in the latter days. I was there when *Tait of Balliol*, with a tremendous flourish of his cap, defied the President of the Oxford Union

\* *Life of Archibald Campbell Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury*. By Randall Thomas Davidson, D.D., Dean of Windsor, and William Benham, B.D., Hon. Canon of Canterbury. In two volumes. London : Macmillan & Co., 1891.

and was fined a pound.' The speaker arose from his chair, and going through the action of violently bringing the cap from far behind him, shook it as in the President's face in truculent fashion. And sitting down, he added, with a smile, 'He was very hot-tempered then.' It could only have been occasionally, one would say.

I do not think any testimony ever borne to Tait's fitness for his great place would have been more valued by himself than this of the saintly Dean Church of St. Paul's; of whom it was truly said by one of the foremost Prelates of the Anglican Church, belonging to quite another party from the Dean's, 'There is nothing in the Church that he is not worthy of.' And now that both Dean and Archbishop are gone, there can be no harm in repeating what was equally honourable to both.

We do not mind much about Tait's frequent statements, beginning early, that he was to be Archbishop of Canterbury. Probably fifty other men were saying the like of themselves about the same time. And one great scholar and divine, still abiding, was far more solemnly designated to the primatial throne, by one possessed of the second sight. It was never to be. But when the writer was a boy, and Tait was no farther on his way than Rugby (where nobody pretends he was a very great Head-Master), the writer was often told by one who had heard the words, how Sir Daniel Sandford had said, 'That boy will wear the mitre.' It was well remembered, too, how James Halley, whom Sir Daniel pointed out as 'the man that beat Tait,' had said near the end, 'I'd have liked to live to see Archie Tait a Bishop.' Other estimates were current too. For Tait, though a great scholar at Glasgow College, when he went to England was never in the same flight with either of the Wordsworths, Lincoln

or St. Andrews. It was after a great debate at the Union, at the time of the Reform Bill of Lord Grey, that a brilliant Oxford Tutor wrote to his brother, Senior Classic at Cambridge, of the magnificent eloquence of certain young orators who had taken part in it. Several were named: but, outstanding among them was one, ' Gladstone, a sure Double-First,' who spoke ' better than Demosthenes ': of course on the side of the most obstructive Toryism. The entire aristocracy of the University, intellectual and social, was ranged on one side. ' And who is there on the other? ' the enthusiastic chronicler went on. (Names shall be withheld, save one.) ' A, Nobody: B, Nobody: C, Nobody: Tait, Nobody! ' The irony of the event is sometimes terrible. And as the revered scholar who wrote the letter read it aloud to a little company after fifty-five years, he added, ' You see, young men should not prophesy.'

But Tait had reached his highest place, and none could call him *Nobody* (you might like him or not), when one of the greatest men in the great Church of England said to the writer, ' I don't regard the Archbishop as a clergyman at all. He is a hard-headed Scotch lawyer.' And then, in the most pathetic tones of the voice which thousands held their breath to hear, ' If I were dying, the very last man I should wish to see is the Archbishop of Canterbury! ' No one who reads the Life would say anything like that now; and the great and good man gone, least of all. But see how the foremost fail to understand one another. Not many quotations can be suffered in my little space. But one shall come here. It tells of the end of his dear old nurse, ' almost my oldest and dearest friend.' Tait had taken his First-Class, and came to Edinburgh for Christmas.

‘ One day, towards the end of December, she was

taken ill. The ailment seemed slight at first, but by the time her beloved Archie arrived she was in high fever, and occasionally distressed in mind. He never left her side except once, when he went to obtain the aid of Mr. Craig, a clergyman of the Scottish Episcopal Church, in order that the old nurse and her grown-up charge might together receive the Holy Communion, which at that time was rarely, if ever, administered privately in the Presbyterian Church, of which Betty was so staunch an adherent.\* When the Holy Communion had been celebrated, Mr. Craig left the two alone together. All night the young man sat by the old nurse's bed, and spoke to her words of peace and comfort as she was able to bear it. She died with her hand clasped in his as the morning broke on the first day of 1834.'

Yes, and it would have been exactly the same had dear old Betty lived to see him Primate. Some words come back to one's memory. He was an illustrious man who said lightly, 'So old Tait's away.' The answer was 'Yes, gone to Paradise.' The rejoinder came. 'Very good, but he won't be Archbishop of Canterbury there.' And indeed he would not. But though he could not take any earthly elevation where he went, he would take with him, wheresoever, the unspoiled heart of that long-departed New-year's-eve. Which is far better.

Too much is made of the Archbishop's Presbyterian extraction and education, as though these did in some degree disqualify him for his place. No doubt, his father was an Elder of the Kirk. So were his two brothers: and they sat regularly in the General Assembly, where Sheriff Tait of Perthshire was an outstanding man. Many times, in May days just departed, the writer beheld the two Maclagans, brothers of the

\* God be thanked, all that is changed.

new Archbishop of York, sitting in that Venerable House. And in his youth he preached, each Sunday afternoon, in a Scotch parish church, to the Archbishop's father and mother. Dean Lake of Durham, in a strain which falls familiar on the ear,\* expresses his opinion that Archbishop Tait, in his Episcopal life, 'made serious mistakes, both in word and action.' Then comes the apology for the uncultured Scot; which will provoke a smile in some readers:

'But when we think of the manner in which, born and bred in a different Communion, he gradually learned, in a time of great difficulty, to understand and even to sympathise with all the varieties of the English Church, and of his constantly increasing determination to do justice to them all—a determination which, I believe, would have gone much further, had his life been preserved'—

And so on. Here is a bit of a certain provincialism, too common in the Anglican Church, which is based on absolute ignorance of things Scottish. There is no gulf at all between the best in the Church of Scotland and the best in the Church of England. Presbytery is accepted, as suiting the genius of the Scottish race: but it counts for nothing, when compared with such vital questions as those of a National profession of Christianity and a National Church. Not an anti-state-church Presbyterian, but a good Anglican churchman, is brother to most men worth counting in the Scottish Kirk. And should the day come which shall put Scottish churchmen to right and left, that will appear. It is twenty-seven years since Mr. Froude, after his very first evening in Scotland, spent in the company of some who are mostly gone, said to the writer, 'I see your best men are exactly like our best men.' And it is many a day since Dr. Liddon, on his

first day in St. Andrews, said how astonished he was at the sympathy he had met in the Kirk : said that though a system he liked not had gradually 'crystallised, through the fault of nobody living,' he found himself drawn, in true affection, to the men. Yet everybody knows that Liddon was uncompromising in his ecclesiastical views : even to a degree which certain of his Scottish friends found hard to bear : indeed did not bear but with frank expression of astonishment. When Bishop Wilberforce came to Scotland, and went about with his eyes blind-folded, he did indeed accept as true, and record in that very regrettable diary, various stories about the Church which were rather more outrageous than if he had stated that black was white. And on August 11, 1861, he wrote therein of 'the bitter, levelling spirit of Presbyterianism' : a spirit which may possibly once have been, but which is utterly extinct among educated men. Quite as much narrowness, bitterness, and wrong-headedness may be found in certain strata of the Church of England, as anywhere North of the Tweed. Read many of the letters which Tait received, not all anonymous : and this will be apparent. The future Archbishop had not far to go : and had nothing at all to get over. Of course to the end, it remained impossible for him to believe that all vital Christianity was confined to the members of Churches with three orders. It was with him as when Principal Shairp went to Oxford in the beginning of the 'Movement,' and could but feel *If those men and women I have known in the Kirk were not Christians, I cannot expect to see any.* But gradually, Tait, in lesser things, not only understood the Anglican Church quite as thoroughly as Dean Lake, but even caught the atmosphere he lived in to a degree which amused a countryman. Meeting for the first time a Scottish parson who had studied Gothic churches

for many years (it was under the shade of Canterbury), he said, 'Did you ever see a Cathedral before ? I mean an English Cathedral.' Here appeared the natural belief of the travelled Scot that his brother Scot knows nothing. Ere the Scottish parson could reply, another dignitary, quite as famous as Tait, said, in a loud voice, 'He has seen them all. He knows a great deal more about them than you do.' Whereupon the ready Primate, with his sweetest smile went on, 'Ah, but you must come and see Lambeth. That is quite as interesting as any Cathedral.' Scotsmen for the most part understand one another perfectly. It was an Englishman, not a Scot, who once said to the writer, speaking of a saintly woman of high worldly place (indeed very high), 'Between ourselves, I fear she is very little better than a Presbyterian.' The words were rendered in a whisper, as stating something too dreadful to be put in audible words.

We did not need this biography to assure us that only by some incredible mistake could the statement have crept into Bishop Wilberforce's Life,\* that Tait said, 'You will be the real Archbishop ; I shall only be so in name.' And again, 'I do not care how soon the world knows what I know, that during your dear father's lifetime he was in reality Archbishop of Canterbury, and I was only his lieutenant.' Anything farther from the actual fact could not be imagined : fifty instances occur which so testify. Tait could not have acted under the orders of any mortal : least of all under the orders of Bishop Wilberforce. And Tait was not a gusher : though he was sometimes very outspoken. Such as knew him would testify that the sentences ascribed to him are singularly unlike his ordinary talk. As for his estimate of his brilliant contemporary, we find it expressed with perfect frank-

\* P. 337. Edition in one vol.

ness. 'The Bishop of Oxford was as eloquent and indiscreet as usual.'\*

The writers of this Life have done their work very fairly, and very thoroughly. The defects of the book come of its not being merely a biography, but a minute history of the main events and controversies in the Church of England during Tait's Episcopate. We are told nothing but what we knew before: and many things are suppressed which many knew: knew not through irresponsible gossip, but surely. The frank revelations (in some details) of Bishop Wilberforce's Life, make a striking contrast with the reticence here. In the main, the Lives are like the men: though Tait could be very frank sometimes. And surely this Life would not make any modest and reasonable man ask to be Archbishop of Canterbury. Lambeth is all very well, though 'the most depressing of homes' in the judgment of one once the head of the family there: Addington in May, with those acres of rhododendrons, with the grand woods, the Scotch firs of Perthshire and the heather, can redeem the big, ugly, featureless house: and the little church is charming, with its quiet churchyard where Tait, Longley, and Sumner sleep, with only the green grass above them. Possibly it may be pleasant to take precedence of a Duke; and the income is handsome when a fleeced Primate has actually got hold of it. One such, a humorist, is said to have preached his first sermon from the text, 'A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves': and another, doing homage to the Queen, said she was the first official he had met who had not asked him for fifty guineas. But the responsibility is awful to a conscientious man: and unless to a man of very exceptional tastes, the work is incredibly wearisome. Every wrong-

headed crank, every insolent idiot, every conscientious bearer of a testimony, from Lord Shaftesbury on one wing to Dr. Pusey on the other, with Dean Stanley away out in the open far from both, has his representation to make to the Archbishop as to what is ruining the Church of England: and his representation, often extremely lengthy, must be considered, and wisely and courteously answered. Not every answer can be as brief as that which in a line told a correspondent that the Archbishop did not see any necessity for the correspondent supplying an alleged deficiency in the Lord's Prayer. Then the dreariness, the utter lack of interest, of the fierce contentions on details of ritual and the like: all related in the Life with conscientious fairness and intolerable prolixity. The biographers were bound to do it, one feels: the fault is not theirs. Here is Scotland again, for quarrelsome ness and wrongheadedness and making vital of the pettiest matters. Well might Newman, still Anglican, write, 'O rail not at our brethren of the North': our brethren of the South, though on different details, are exactly the same. And all these dreary squabbles must be patiently gone into by the Archbishop. Nothing must be contemptuously daffed aside: as Tait once said in Perthshire, *It wouldn't do*. Patience must be illimitable. And then the letters: the baskets-full to read: the baskets-full to write. Every Bishop of a large diocese has this cross to bear: but the Archbishop is a quasi-Patriarch; and from every corner of the earth where the Anglican Episcopate, or anything like it, has spread, the entreaty for counsel in all perplexity, for sympathy in all trouble, comes to Lambeth or Addington. One knows the meaning of the deteriorated handwriting: of the signature abridged to the utmost: of the gradual cessation of all punctuation. It tells a pathetic story

of overwork : and that in the way which takes most out of a man, next to vehement oratory ; perpetual letter-writing. A Bishop's letter is a touching thing to see : less so indeed when a Chaplain who has learnt to write exactly like him pens the letter, and the blameless Prelate does but add his name. Not many human beings realise what it is to write seventy letters in a day. The writer remembers how Dean Wellesley of Windsor once said to him, with asperity, ' You could not make Stanley a Bishop : he writes such an abominable hand.' But what would that hand have grown to, after twenty years on the Bench ? It is not so many years since the writer walked, side by side with the Archbishop, up and down by the bank of a little Scottish river. ' What insanity it was in A.,' he said, ' to work himself to death as he did ! ' Then, in a worn voice, with a sorrowful face he expatiated on the foolishness of overworking. Ah, like other good men, wise for everybody except himself. Only anonymous letter-writers, as a rule, take upon themselves to admonish the Primate of All England. But the writer thought, within himself, ' There is not a man in Britain, to-day, overworking more than you.' Never hurried nor flurried : nothing morbid or fanciful about him : good, honest, brave, strong, cautious, far-seeing : astute without shadow of craftiness : placed very high, yet with head absolutely unturned : had but the burden been brought within man's bearing, he need not have had that solemn warning before sixty, he ought to have lived to fourscore.

Then the sitting next the ministerial bench in the Lords, at any moment liable to be called on to speak in the name of the greatest National Church in Christendom. No wonder that somebody, the first time he had so to speak, was in a state of trepidation which a lay peer irreverently called ' a blue funk.' ' Why is

not somebody else there ?' was the question put to one who was criticising a Primate's action, having himself declined the Primacy. ' Ah,' was the quiet answer, ' that man would have disappeared. He would have been in his grave. It is too much for anyone.'

Tait was helped by his vein of Scottish humour. He listened to an amusing story with real enjoyment : and he told one admirably well. The sorrowful face, with the sad smile, added to the effect. Some remember one which Dean Stanley repeated at a Bishop's dinner at Lambeth on the authority of a Scottish friend. It elicited from the Archbishop no more than ' A very good story ': but it is literally true. On one of his latest visits to a certain country house in a Scottish county, he went alone to the post-office to send a telegram to his brother. He wrote it out. ' The Archbishop of Canterbury to Sheriff Tait,' and handed it in. The sceptical old postmaster read it aloud in contemptuous tones : '*The Archbishop of Canterbury*' : and added, ' Wha may ye be that taks this cognomen ? ' The Archbishop, taken aback, remained silent for a moment. The morning was cold, and he had a woollen comforter wrapped round his neck : but on second view, the postmaster thought he looked more respectable than on a first, and added, ' Maybe ye're the gentleman himsel'. ' Tait replied, modestly, ' For want of a better, I am. ' On which the good old Scot hastened to apologise for his first suspicion of imposture : adding, ' I might have seen you were rather consequential about the legs. ' Then he added words of cheer, which Tait said truly were vitally Scotch : ' I have a son in London, a lad in a shop ; and he gaed to hear ye preach one day, and was verra weel satisfeed. '

It was during that same visit that one was impressed by his odd suspicion of pressmen. A conspicuous Lon-

don clergyman had written some sketches in a daily newspaper of immense circulation, which had attracted much notice. 'Oh,' said the Archbishop, '*he's just a reporter.*' And there an end of him. And though it cannot be recorded, it cannot be forgot, how something condemnatory of the extreme ritual of a well-known London church, awakened a deep but musical voice of remonstrance. No one can say that that house was divided against itself. But there was a loving diversity of opinion and of liking, which was quite well understood. The good son Craufurd, early taken, thought the Church of the Future would be 'higher than my Father, lower than my Mother.' And standing by the altar in the pretty chapel of a Bishop's house, out of which a beautiful conservatory opened, the good woman said to the Bishop, 'How convenient for bringing in flowers!' The Bishop had no objection. But the Archbishop silently shook his head, though not austerely.

Archibald Campbell Tait was born at Harviestoun, in Clackmannanshire, on December 22, 1811. The family had conformed to the National Kirk; but the strain was originally Episcopal. The blood was purely Scottish; and Tait, to the end, was a Scot. Even the accent could never deceive a countryman. I have heard English folk call it English. It was very Scotch indeed. He was well-connected, his grandfather being the Scottish Chief Justice. He was the ninth child and was born club-footed. This was corrected: but not quite: he was 'never a good processional Bishop.' He was baptized in the drawing-room at Harviestoun, by Dr. MacKnight of the Old Church, Edinburgh: 'a large china vase' being used on such occasions. The Edinburgh house was in Park Place, near the Meadows. His mother, a woman of the sweetest nature, died when Archy was not two years

old. The father was a most lovable man ; but it was not from him that Tait inherited his caution. First, the High School of Edinburgh ; then the New Academy, an admirable school, in the most unattractive surroundings. Here Tait was head-boy in his year : 'Dux.' At sixteen, to Glasgow College. Under the care of the authoritative but devoted Betty he lived in a lodging in College Street, looking on the grim but solemn façade of the old University buildings, all vanished. I have heard him speak with great feeling of those days. Sir Daniel Sandford was Professor of Greek : a very great man in his day. He died on his birthday : forty. I remember well how startled the Archbishop was when told this. It was suggested that Arnold was but forty-six. But he replied, 'Ah, in those years a man does the best work of his life.' Professor Buchanan held the Logic Chair : Tait says a man 'without any shining abilities.' Not the ordinary verdict of Glasgow men. Tait worked extremely hard, getting up at 4.30 A.M. He was all his life a pattern of conscientious goodness : like another, he had been 'born before the Fall.' There is a touching little diary, of hard work so long past. But many Glasgow students worked as hard and did not come to anything. James Halley, who died early, and who was terribly handicapped, 'beat Tait' for the Greek Blackstone : but generally they ran a very equal race. Here he attended 'the Ramshorn Kirk,' now known as St. David's. Finally, he got one of the Snell Exhibitions to Oxford : not improbably for the reason he suggests, the hospitalities of his relation at Garscube. The Snell Exhibitions are held at Balliol ; and here Tait, a Tory at Glasgow, gradually turned a Whig. To the end of his life he was for Roman Catholic Emancipation and Endowment. His father, greatly beloved, died while he was at Oxford. In November 1833 he

took his B.A. degree: First Class in Classics. Being entirely dependent on his own exertions, he remained at Balliol and took private pupils. But in due time he became Fellow and Tutor of Balliol: and now the struggle of his life was over. He became 'much more of a High Churchman than I was: nor has the Church of Scotland so much of my admiration as in former times.' Quite naturally, he passed into Anglicanism: being confirmed at Oxford as a young man. And on Trinity Sunday, 1836, he was ordained Deacon on his Fellowship by Bagot, Bishop of Oxford. At once, he set himself to clerical duty in the unattractive Baldon, five miles from Oxford: and, still busy with tutorial work, he served that cure diligently for five years.

In these early days, he thought of the Moral Philosophy Chair at Glasgow: but more seriously of the Greek, a very considerable prize. I believe that he might have had it, in succession to Sandford. But having taken English orders, he had a difficulty about the University tests, which others did not feel at all. It was the turning-point in his life. Lushington got the Chair, to be succeeded by Jebb, both Senior Classics. Tait's life was to be in England: he determined 'to remain an Episcopalian.' Everyone knows how in March 1841 he was one of the Four Tutors who signed the famous letter concerning Tract 90. The letter was written by Tait. And he wrote, with some asperity, of those 'who regard the Kirk of Scotland as the synagogue of Baal.' He very decidedly preferred Anglicanism, both in government and worship: but, to the end, his heart warmed to the Church of his father, if not of his grandfather. In a little while, the 'great door was opened.' Arnold died on Sunday, June 12, 1842. And of eighteen candidates, after long perplexity between the two youngest, Tait and

C. J. Vaughan, the decision was made on July 29, and Stanley, who thought no one really fit to take Arnold's place, received 'the awful intelligence of your election.' Tait was inaugurated on Sunday, August 14, Stanley preaching the sermon. He wanted some months of being thirty-one.

The story henceforth is within living memories. An adequate Head-Master: not a great one. He had the help of a Composition-Master from the first. The present Dean of Westminster (Bradley) says, 'His sermons were sometimes really impressive. More than this I can hardly say.' Principal Shairp wrote: 'Tait was certainly by no means a born school-master. He had not himself been at an English public-school.' And he had to get on with assistant-masters, who thought Arnold's place might be occupied, but never filled. On Midsummer day 1843 Tait was married to Catherine Spooner. 'The bright presence of the beautiful young wife' was outstanding at Rugby, and afterwards. Besides other things, she was quite equal to unravelling the most complicated accounts, which had perplexed trained business-men. And this in the early Spring of 1848, when Tait seemed dying, and dictated his farewell to the Sixth Form. He got better: but it was a relief to all when, in October 1849, he accepted the Deanery of Carlisle: being, as Dean Lake writes, 'a Protestant, with a strong dash of the Presbyterian, to the end.' The Dean adds that in the Rugby of Arnold's memory and of Stanley's biography, 'a little cold water from time to time, kindly administered, was not without its uses.' And the unexcitable, humorous Scot was eminently the man to administer it.

In May 1850 Tait and his household settled in the Deanery at Carlisle. He did much as Dean: but it was his work on the Oxford University Commission

which marked him out for elevation by a Liberal Government. In March and April 1856 the awful blow fell, whose story has been touchingly told: Five of six little daughters died of scarlet fever. Between March 10 and April 10 they were laid to rest: and father and mother were never the same again. And on September 17 Tait writes in his diary that he had this morning been offered the See of London: that now (11 A.M.) he was to take an hour of prayer, though 'I have no doubt of accepting the offer.' 'God knows I have not sought it.' It might have been as well, in stating the considerations which pointed to Tait, to have omitted some lines which yet recall a savage sentence in the *Saturday Review* of those days: Who wrote it? Some think they know. The Prime Minister was Lord Palmerston. And ever the friendly biographers say 'it was indeed a bold step on his part to send Dean Tait to London.' He was consecrated in the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, on November 23, 1856. The well-meaning Lord Shaftesbury was 'alarmed' by the Bishop appointing Stanley one of his Chaplains. 'The Bishop knows not the gulf he is opening for himself.' We all know the good man's way. The wonder is that he did not say (as usual with him) that 'thousands and tens of thousands were startled.' But in a fortnight's time he wrote, 'It is all quite right. I have no more apprehensions. Stability of mind is a fine thing.'

Troubles came, of course. The Divorce Act: Confession: St. George's-in-the-East: are ancient history. The open-air preaching: the services in Exeter Hall and in certain theatres: the evening services in Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's; and in Bethnal Green: the Primary Charge, reaching to near five hours, and certainly up to date: the offer in September 1862 of York: are remembered as of yesterday.

The controversy as to *Essays and Reviews* brought letters from Dr. Temple which must have been very painful to read. Nobody dreamt that Temple was to be Bishop of London himself. 'You ought not to make it impossible for a friend to calculate on what you will do. I do not care for your severity, I do care for being cheated.' Then came Bishop Colenso, and Bishop Gray. The question of what was called Ritualism grew warm in 1860. All Saints', St. Alban's, St. Peter's, London Docks, became prominent; and a 'religious' newspaper spoke of 'that ecclesiastical bully, the Presbyterian-minded Bishop of London, who has shown himself as narrow-minded a bigot and as unchristian a gentleman as ever disgraced a Bishopric.' In April 1863 the 'Bishop of London's Fund' was founded. Through all, the work of the largest diocese in the world went steadily on. And on November 13, 1868, being at Stonehouse, in Thanet, the letter came from Mr. Disraeli which offered the Primacy. The offer was accepted the same afternoon. The circumstances are quite well known.

Most readers will acknowledge the wisdom of the part taken both by the Archbishop and the Queen in the difficult matter of Irish Disestablishment. On November 18, 1869, when only fifty-eight, a stroke of paralysis fell, from which his entire recovery was something miraculous. Probably the Church owes the introduction of Suffragan Bishops to so striking an instance of fatal over-work. In the earlier days of the Archbishop's illness, Dr. Temple was appointed Bishop of Exeter, having (as Dr. Pusey averred) 'participated in the ruin of countless souls.' Early in 1872 Lord Shaftesbury besought the Lords to take action against Ritualism: declaring (of course) that 'the fate of the Church of England is trembling in the balance.' But he found it 'hopeless, thankless, and

fruitless work to reform Church abominations.' Nothing need be said of the Athanasian Creed, save that Tait was violently abused by some. As little of the Public Worship Regulation Act. At the close of May 1877 the Archbishop came to Edinburgh to the funeral of his brother John. He visited the General Assembly, then in session: which rose to receive him. The death of his son, May 25, 1878, was an awful blow: and still heavier that of his wife, who died at Edinburgh on Advent Sunday in the same year. Many know their graves, in Addington Churchyard, side by side: 'Mother and Son.'

The life of dignified drudgery went on a little longer. It was at the Royal Academy Banquet of 1880 (he wrote his speeches for such occasions) that he said, 'I am sure that the general effect of looking day after day upon a hideous building is debasing—I will not say demoralising.' The words have often been quoted to the end of improving Scottish parish kirks. Tait had no knowledge whatever of music. No man (with an ear) who sat by him in Canterbury Cathedral while the Litany was sung, will ever forget it. In a loud speaking voice, the Primate produced a discord which made the nerves tingle. Being at Paris he 'went almost every day to the Madeleine.' Shade of Lord Shaftesbury! Then at Lambeth, on just this June day, 'Interviews and business all day long till I was nearly mad.' On July 23, 1882, the diary says, 'Still alive, but very shaky.' In August he was from Monday to Thursday at Selsdon Park with the Bishop of Winchester, 'alarmingly feeble.' Yet the humour lingered: To a worrying applicant, 'Tell him he is a consummate ass, but do it very kindly.' But he ran down fast: on Sunday, September 3, he thought he was dying. Some weeks more were given in the quiet sick-room at Addington as the days shortened.

But 'it is better I should go now.' Early on a Saturday morning all were summoned. A separate farewell to each: then the benediction in a steady voice. 'And now it is all over. It isn't so very dreadful after all.'

He went at seven on Advent Sunday morning. It was on that day, four years since, that his wife had gone before him. He was seventy-two. As Chalmers said of another Primate, 'He had passed through the fire of worldly elevation, and the smell of it had not passed upon him.' It was Archie Tait of Glasgow College that died.

(1894.)

## XXI.

### THE IDEAL OF A NATIONAL CHURCH: AN UNPRACTICAL IMAGINATION.

YOU all know what it is to sit down by the fire-side, quite alone; and to picture out pleasant things which you are sure will never be, for yourselves and your children. When you come to know people well, you find that many more indulge in this dream-life than you would once have believed: and among them some quite prosaic folk. Let me confess that in long walks about this parish, solitary walks, I have often beguiled the way by picturing out, in full detail, the parish as 'worked' to a perfection now unknown; and not likely to be known before the Millennium. One imagines all evil gone, all pain, all wrong-doing; and everything happy and good marvellously grown. Specially when from a certain height one has looked down upon the solemn city, the red roofs, the dark spires and ruins cutting against the purple sea, one has pictured the vast cathedral restored in glory, the place of a worthy worship, purified from all taint of error, sincere and sublime: daily thronged by devout multitudes, each soul finding help, guidance, and comfort: as, in fact, never cathedral was, here or elsewhere. But the vision goes, and there are the desolate fragments, wind-swept and mournful beyond words. Even better

than any material magnificence, one has beheld, as in a dream, a sacred city where was no want, no drunkenness, no ignorance, not one heavy heart: where all the people were well-to-do, good, and content: where life was earnest, and yet beautiful; full of healthful work, yet having the due share of bright play: specially where every little child was wisely and kindly cared for: and the Church the central spring of all. As I know that I shall never see these things, and could not bring them to be, even though to-morrow I found a four-leaved shamrock, one may enjoy them for a little in this airy fashion; the vision of a place where was no ill-nature, no gossip; and of course (a churchman may be permitted to fancy) no dissent! In fact, there is not very much. But in reverie, there would not be so much as a single Non-conformist for Sydney Smith to stick a fork in. The good Christians who stand apart from us would all have drawn together again.

Among such unpractical imaginations is that which is to be slightly sketched in the following pages: the Ideal of a National Church. I do not go deep: I keep off the perilous question of Doctrine. It is but of Worship and Government one has meditated in these seasons of reverie. I know well how utterly vain and purposeless are the suggestions to be made. The practical difficulties are so great. Even to push these views would need some one much stronger than the writer; much fonder of strife; and with a much tougher skin. Nothing on this earth would induce me to engage in ecclesiastical controversy: I have remarked how like to devils such controversialists grow. But a dream may be permitted, of what might have been; though it will never be. One may be allowed to fancy what, if it were all to begin again, with a blank page, it might be well to do.

The writer is engaged in the practical working of one of the two National Churches of Britain : revering and loving both equally, and earnestly desiring they were drawn nearer. He is sincerely devoted to his own Church, though not unaware of her wants and weaknesses : seriously pledged never, directly or indirectly, to aim at what might harm her, though needing no pledge to bind him : finally, bound to her as one used by her kindly as man can be. Reverently and humbly he ventures to suggest certain respects in which improvement seems possible in his own Church ; and in her grander and more powerful Sister.

If there is to be a National Church at all, it is plainly desirable that it should include, if not the entire nation, then as large a part of the nation as possible : all in the nation who do not stand apart upon principle. As it is not possible to force people into conformity with the National Church, the only remaining way of getting people to conform to it is by attracting them to it : that is, by making things about the Church such as people will like, and will be pleased with. I purpose to point out certain respects in which National Churches have hitherto failed to make themselves as pleasant as they might be to as great a number of people as possible. I do not pretend to any special knowledge of church history ; *that* is not in the least necessary for my purpose. I shall build on no facts but such as everybody knows. No good, therefore, will follow from some small-minded, well-informed person laying himself on my track to catch me tripping in little details, and then showing me up with the air of a man who has answered me. Such treatment would be merely irrelevant. But it would not be unprecedented.

I.—*Worship.*

Let us first think of Worship.

Public worship is esteemed as a necessary part of the organisation of all Christian communities. People meet together, in buildings appointed for the purpose, at least on Sundays, and join in a certain ritual. We put the Church of Rome out of our view, as far too big, and too confirmed in its own way of doing things, to be in the least degree affected by anything to be said at this time of day. And looking at the Protestant communions of Britain, it may be said that their public worship consists of prayer, praise, the reading of Scripture, and preaching ; with the occasional celebration of sacramental solemnities of a special character. In England the prayers are provided by authority, and read by the officiating minister from a printed book. In Scotland the officiating minister invents or compiles his own prayers, and the congregation can never be sure of what is coming. In England the worship is in large part antiphonal : the people respond to the sentences said by the clergyman. In Scotland the people listen to or join in the prayers in silence : not even *Amen* is audibly said, unless in exceptional places. As for praise, the main difference is that in England the singing has instrumental accompaniment ; in Scotland, generally, not so. For the reading of the lessons, and the preaching, things are much alike in both countries. There are differences, further, in the way in which the clergy on either side of the Tweed are arrayed : the distinction is mainly that between Black and White. And in England the officiating priest does part of the service in one place ; then moves a few feet off and does another part ; turning about, likewise, in several

directions: all this for very good reasons, but for reasons not known to the uneducated portion of the congregation. In Scotland the architect fixes on a point where the clergyman can be seen, and whence he can be heard; and proceeding to that point, he does the entire service, with no change of attitude beyond standing up and sitting or kneeling down. Very keen likes and dislikes exist in the mind of many people as to the various points of difference in these ways of conducting public worship.

Now it seems to me that those who have arranged the methods of public worship in National Churches, have fallen into error by selecting, or devising, and enforcing, that one form of worship which was in their judgment the best; ignoring the inevitable difference there must always be between the likings of the more and the less cultivated in such matters; not to mention the likings of exceptional classes as well as individuals. Thus in England the worship of the National Church has been proved by long trial to repel the poor, and even the lower middle class; while in Scotland the worship of the National Church has been proved by centuries of trial to repel the more cultivated. In Cornwall, in Wales, in large parts of Yorkshire, the Church persists in providing a worship which the masses will not accept; and thus in driving them out of the Church to get what they want; which ought to be provided for them within the Church. The Anglican Church virtually says to the poor, 'You ought to like this, because it is the best in the opinion of those most qualified to judge.' It is as though you persisted in thrusting Mozart's music on people who are educated only up to the mark of appreciating a negro melody. But a thing is not good unless it is good to you. And if you be so ignorant and uncultivated that you

cannot enjoy or even discern the inexpressible beauty of the Liturgy, nor join with pleasure in choral worship under the sublime vault of this cathedral or that, it will serve no purpose to try to thrust the thing upon you. Now, why should not the National Church recognise the great varieties of taste that exist in the nation ; and provide or permit an equal variety in its public worship ?—providing Canterbury Cathedral and York Minster with their grand service for such as like it ; and the flat-roofed brick meeting-house too with its homely preacher for the numbers who crowd to it, and who can enjoy its rude prayers and exhortations ? All religious feeling should be permitted to find its expression within the pale of the Church ; and the religious feeling of all kinds of people, the rudest and humblest as well as the most cultivated. Why not recognise the fact that a very ordinary man, who cannot at all see the difficulties which surround many theological topics to the view of persons with more insight, is eminently fitted to please and profit many congregations ; and so recognise the useful service of very ordinary men, confident, loud-voiced, fluent of speech and zealous of heart ? Why not recognise the fact that a cultivated scholar is less fitted to reach certain classes than a man drawn from their own order ; and thus have hewers of wood and drawers of water within the Church rather than outside it ? One Sunday afternoon, being in a little cathedral city, I went to the cathedral ; one of the noblest in England, with a truly grand service, most carefully and reverently performed. There was hardly any congregation in the magnificent place. There was no sermon : the sermon in the morning had been incredibly weak and stupid. Coming out of the church, and passing through a dirty by-street, I saw a large crowd pouring out of the very shabbiest little con-

venticle I ever beheld. So there were Christian people in that little city that May Sunday, ready to go to church if they were interested in what was done there, yet who plainly were not at all attracted or interested by the worship of the minster. Why were these poor people driven out of the Church of England to get what they wanted? Why does not the Church of England provide for them as well as for their betters? I do not know what sect that little meeting-house belonged to; but I am bold to say that the crowd of people who attended it went there simply because the worship in it pleased them, and not in the least because they had any fault to find with the doctrine or government of their National Church. There seems to be no good reason for a hard and fast uniformity of worship within the Church. Plain buildings, without organs, with a service permitting the utmost liberty of extemporaneous prayer, which, though rude and irreverent and abhorrent to a cultivated taste, can yet adapt itself to the present wants and feelings of poor people as no Liturgy ever can, ought to be part of the equipment of the Church of England. No principle is involved in the matter. It is a mere matter of expediency. But the expediency is very obvious and urgent. Are you, lest you permit a worship beneath the æsthetic sensibilities of the best educated, to drive scores of thousands of zealous Christians into hostile separation? The æsthetic folk need never go to the plain conventicles; so they will not be offended. And the difference is immense, between two opposing armies; and two divisions, wearing different uniform, of the same army. There might be some rivalry, some antagonism, between the grand Gothic parish church, with its surpliced choir and its intoned prayers and its upper-class congregation; and the modern brick erection where these

things are not, but other things are found which are very dear to the worshippers they suit. But there would not be the thorough estrangement, the smouldering fire of dislike and suspicion, which (spite of all smooth pretences) almost always part Church and Dissent. All parties, now, would be loyal children of the Church of England.

In large towns, there would be separate buildings fitted for the diverse forms of worship. But in small parishes, where there is but one church, why not let the church be occupied, at separate hours, by the people who prefer either use? Many parishioners would be found to attend both forms of service. And the same clergyman might easily conduct both. Supply will speedily follow demand. If it is once understood that the power of conducting simple services, in which the sermon is the outstanding thing, and in which the sermon is to be extemporeaneous, homely, and fitted to keep up by all means short of extravagance the attention of plain folk, is demanded of the Anglican clergy, hundreds of clever men will appear, fully qualified to do in good style all that is needed. After conducting the decorous liturgical service in the morning, and reading a neat discourse of twenty minutes to a small congregation of the better sort, the priest will in the evening cast off all conventional restraints; pray in a homely and familiar style, with special references to the peculiar character and circumstances of the people; and preach without book in a rough and pointed fashion, full of the homeliest illustration, to a great crowd who would but for this service be filling the pews of the dissenting chapel.

And if such increased liberty as to the form of worship be needful in England to hold the poor, not

less needful is it in Scotland to hold the rich. The national Presbyterian service does excellently for the less educated ; but you will never get cultivated people really to approve a service which is exactly what the officiating minister may choose to make it ; which is dependent not merely on that individual's good taste, devout feeling, and command of language, but on things about him which are not constant qualities—as the state of his nervous system on that particular day. 'I can think, here in my study, of what I should wish to say in prayer on such a special occasion : but I have not that command of my nervous system that I could be sure of saying it worthily when the time came : So you must excuse me from officiating.' Such were the words once said to the writer by one of the best of Scotch ministers.\* The writer was a young man : the speaker was a true-blue Presbyterian ; but the saying suggested many things, which were not expressed. So long as the minister occupies a much higher place than the flock, intellectually and spiritually, the Scotch fashion may do : but not after that ceases to be so. The upshot is, that a very large proportion of the most cultivated members of the Scottish Church tell you frankly that they disapprove its worship ; that they adhere to it on political grounds, supporting it as the National Establishment : that when in England they as of course conform to the Church of England ; and that if the Scottish Church were disestablished, and thus ceased to make its claim on them as one of the institutions of the country, they would go where they would find a worship they prefer, and turn Scotch Episcopalians. And, though it is quite wrong to represent that anything like a majority of the aristocracy and the landed gentry of Scotland are Episcopalians, yet it is certain

\* The late Dr. Veitch, of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh.

that many of these classes are members of the Episcopal communion ; so much so, that this little denomination, numbering a seventy-fifth part of the population numerically, has probably one-half of the educated part of the nation. In some places it has a still larger proportion. But if an Episcopalian means one who believes in the exclusively divine right of Episcopal church government, or even who cares much about any form of church government, then the more intelligent of the members of the Scotch Episcopal communion have no right whatever to the name of Episcopalian. They tell you, probably, they go to their chapel simply for the prayers ; they cannot bear to be helplessly in the preacher's hands for that portion of the service ; and they describe, with great frankness, the inexpressible badness of the preaching which they commonly hear in their little sanctuary. Few Scotch Episcopalians know that when Episcopacy was established in Scotland, the Prayer-Book was not used. *The Episcopal service and the Presbyterian were identical.* The Prayer-Book is the essence of Episcopacy, in the mind of the average Scotch Episcopalian. And while the Episcopal Church had no Prayer-Book, the Presbyterian Church had one for many a year.

Now, as the National Church in England may fairly be asked to yield a little to keep or regain the poor, why not the National Church in Scotland to keep or regain the rich ? There is something deeper and more respectable than the instinct of conformity to fashion in the case of many whom the Liturgy has drawn away from the national worship ; and it is a grievous misfortune, and a thing of evil omen to the country, if it comes to be so, that the rich and poor, already far too much divided, are to be divided still more vitally by the gulf of religious separation. It is an evil thing for the rich, if they put themselves in

a little band on one side, with the vast majority of their countrymen dead against them in hostile array. Scotland is, of all countries, the country where it is absolutely suicidal for the aristocracy and the landed gentry to separate themselves in their worship from the mass of their countrymen. However little certain people may like the national worship, it would be wise in them to conform to it, and try to mend it. This, in these days, they could easily and quickly do.

I am bold to say that the main reason why the Scotch aristocracy have lost, where they have lost, their hold on the nation is where they are becoming, in considerable part, an alien aristocracy : aliens specially in religion ; and this in a nation where religious feeling runs high, and where the general level of intelligence is very high. The weavers of a big Scotch village can give at least as clear a reason for the faith, political and religious, that is in them, as the squire can who lives in the great house near. The reason may be wrong, and may draw great part of its force from class prejudice ; but it is clearly seen, tenaciously held, and capable of fluent and forcible expression.

As I have ventured to suggest that the Anglican Church might, to its great strengthening, permit services within its pale formed on the Scotch model, so let it be asked why might not the Scotch National Church permit within its pale such services as might satisfy those who now, in desire of something more decorous, go off to Episcopal nonconformity ? Of course, this would not satisfy those who in conscience believe that without Episcopal orders there is no church. But there is little indeed of that belief in hard-headed and common-sense Scotland. After the morning service for the multitude, according to the old use, why not have a service in which the prayers are read, for such as want it ? Principle is not involved.

Prayers are already read in some Scotch churches : why not in all, at such an hour as may offend none and please many ?

Another word. If you are to have read prayers at all, you lose the main good of them unless they are Responsive. Even those in Scotland who use the beautiful services of the Book of Common Order of the Church Service Society, complain of a certain chilliness which comes of the absence of Responses : and try hard to attain at least to the saying audibly of the Lord's Prayer and the Amens. Further, a brand-new Liturgy, however excellent, will not do : it must be one surrounded by old associations. The Liturgy for the English-speaking world is the Book of Common Prayer. There is nothing better in this world. And its use would draw together those who have been too long held apart.

Let me sum up what has been said. A National Church ought to permit the utmost variety in its worship. If the congregation of any church desire with unanimity to have anything that is not properly outrageous, let them have it, and God's blessing on it. Specially, a National Church ought to provide worship of the two great opposed species : the liturgical service, which must evermore commend itself to the more cultivated ; the extemporaneous, flexible service, with its great power of adaptation to present circumstances, which will always attract the poor.

## *II.—Government.*

The National Church must have some kind of government. Lazy men among the working clergy must be kept up to their work : foolish men (in so far as possible) kept straight : disreputable men punished or cast out. So far, a Church is like any other associa-

tion of human beings ; from a boat's crew or a lodge of Odd Fellows up to a nation. In the case of the Church, there is the further impression in many minds that an unbroken succession ought to be kept up through its governors : that is, the same persons are to act as spiritual progenitors, and as moral policemen or magistrates. Well-grounded or groundless, the belief is widely diffused that in the Church the line must be kept unbroken : each individual ruler or office-bearer exercises his authority because it has been passed on to him, with solemn observances, from those who went before him. It is not necessary that you have an unbroken succession of colonels to make an existing colonel competent. If you have a skilful and able military commander, equal to his work, it matters not at all though he be the first of his order, and without official pedigree. Efficiency is the test, elsewhere, of a ruler being the right man for his place. But if you believe some, you will fancy that the most incompetent ruler, in the Church, may be the right man ; and the most efficient, the wrong man. Doctrine is involved here : and I put this question aside meanwhile.

What is the right Government for the Ideal National Church ?

Practically, we find that under any, the individual parochial incumbent has leave to do much as he likes : unless in very extraordinary cases of foolishness or wickedness.

I take for granted that the question of Church Government, like that of worship, is to be settled by considerations of expediency. The best and most useful government is the right one. The right government is that which governs best : whose practical conveniences and advantages are greatest. I do not believe that any church government is of

Divine authority in such a sense as to make every other church government wrong, and displeasing to God. There is not the slightest warrant in written Revelation for such a belief. There are things in written Revelation which point in quite opposite directions: and there is no simple, explicit, unmistakable announcement of the Divine will. I judge from this, that the thing is of no great consequence: I judge from this that it may be left for men to settle among themselves; and that what suits the genius of a nation (which may be conspicuously unsuited to the genius of the next nation) is the right thing for that nation. Of course, we all know that there are persons who hold Episcopacy to be the church government which is exclusively of Divine right. It is pleasant to find a dogma compactly and clearly stated: and I have satisfaction in making the following quotation from a little volume entitled, *Questions and Answers illustrative of the Church Catechism.*\*

‘Q. By what outward mark may we distinguish the Church from these separated bodies?

‘A. Most easily, by its having the three holy orders of the ministry, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, deriving their power from Christ through the Apostles.

‘Q. Is no community of Christians, then, a part of the Church without these holy orders?

‘A. No: WITHOUT THEM THERE IS NO CHURCH.’

Some centuries ago, many in Scotland held Presbytery to be the church government of exclusively Divine right. None such are now to be found, unless among the most ignorant and prejudiced. Intelligent members of the Scottish Church take no higher ground than this: that Presbytery has just as much and as little Divine authority as any other form of govern-

\* London, Joseph Masters: 1867.

ment; and that it suits the race amid which it has (in Britain) found its home. It is curious, that while in Scotland the belief in the exclusive right of Presbytery has died out in the cultivated class, it is just in a highly-cultivated though narrow class in England that the dogma of the exclusive right of Episcopacy, unknown to the chief of the founders of the Church of England, has in these last years revived. And common candour constrains one to admit that something very like Episcopal church government was very early developed in the Christian Church, and continued without break till the Reformation. Nothing in the least degree resembling Presbytery had been known since the third century, till it was devised and set up in the sixteenth. And the benefits of Presbytery ought to be very great and unquestionable, to justify a variation from the mode of the entire Catholic Church, for at least thirteen hundred years.

The existing forms of church government are practically three: Episcopacy, Presbytery, Independency. Beginning with the Brownists, or Independents, we may cast aside their system from our present inquiry: both because it is plain it never can prevail, and because it virtually amounts to Presbytery. For, though the peculiar theory of Independency is that each congregation of Christian people meeting together for worship forms a church, with right of self-government, and answerable to no authority beyond itself, it is known that these separate churches or congregations associate themselves in a Union which is to all intents a church in the ordinary sense: and that if the minister of any individual church venture to teach doctrines different from those taught by the other ministers in the Union, he is cut off from the Union, and so rattenred, or marked as a knob-stick or black sheep. And the persons who sit in judgment

upon his doctrine, and decide whether or not he shall be rattenet, are the ministers of neighbouring congregations: who thus, in fact, act as a Presbytery. The difference is, that whereas a Presbytery is a legal court, bound by well-known laws of evidence and procedure, these Independent ministers are a court analogous to the governing body of a trades union: decide, not upon evidence, but upon hearsay or gossip; and may ratten their friend without putting him upon any regular defence. It is plain that a government consisting of three or four self-constituted judges meeting in a back parlour in secrecy, and deciding on such evidence as that Mrs. Smith said the other day to Mrs. Brown, who told it to Mrs. Jones, who repeated it to one of the judges, that Mr. Robinson had really been preaching such terrible things that she could not go to hear him any more, will not do for the Ideal National Church. Indeed, the best men among the Independents do not defend their system. I could add much more: but I do not choose to indicate individuals.

The choice, then, lies between Episcopacy and Presbytery. Let us look at the *pros* and *cons*.

The nature of these two forms of church government is, in the main, well understood. You see the one in the Church of England: the other in the Church of Scotland. The practical bearing on the working clergy is much the same. Any faithful and wise parish clergyman is permitted to work his parish in his own way, no man interfering with him. A good man is trusted: as a good man ought to be. There is no nagging interference in either National Church. The beneficed clergy in either country are, generally speaking, entirely content with the rule under which they live. And I suppose there is no better account of the law, than that it hardly ever needs to be called into exercise.

Under Presbytery, there is no hierarchy. All the parochial clergy are, in theory, equal. The differences which arise in authority and influence are purely personal, and do not come of their office. It is an essentially democratic or republican system. The priesthood consists of two orders: ministers and elders. In theory, both these are presbyters, with no priestly claims. In practice the elders are laymen, the ministers clergymen. Both are ordained: but the clergy alone by the laying on of the hands of other clergymen. If you wish to know how little effect theory has upon practice, you may survey the Scotch Church. You will find among its clergy just as High Churchmen as you will find anywhere: men who attach just as much importance as any to their orders, their succession, their sacraments, their sacred buildings. Of course, there are Low Churchmen, too: and a small school of Broad Churchmen, able and growingly influential. The benefices are on a scale of modest equality: there are no great prizes. And there is no higher dignity than that of parish clergymen. The Principals of Universities, if clergymen, are by courtesy addressed as *The Very Reverend*. But they have no right to the distinction; and precise people do not give it to them. The degree of Doctor of Divinity is not recognised by the Church as giving any precedence. All presbyters, in fact, are equal. And the incumbents of a number of adjacent parishes, marked out by law, meeting at stated intervals, form the court called a presbytery: which has large powers over its clerical members. An appeal lies from the Presbytery to the Synod, which is an aggregate meeting of several Presbyteries: and from the Synod to the General Assembly. This court meets once a year for about ten days. Its powers are both legislative and judicial: and in spiritual matters, its decision is

final. It consists of a certain number of clergy and lay elders sent by each Presbytery: likewise of representatives of the universities and royal burghs throughout Scotland. Its members number about four hundred.

Under Episcopacy there is gradation in dignity and authority: there are the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons. Virtually there are but two orders, bishops and priests: the diaconate being simply an introductory step to the priesthood. The bishops are selected by the prime minister: in the main, well selected. In recent years, they have all but invariably been men of high mark and character: devout, able, wise. They are the spiritual progenitors of the Church: ordination, though shared in by presbyters, is not valid unless presided over by a bishop. They have certain limited legal powers of exercising discipline: these powers cannot be used, in many cases, unless at a very great cost in money. The bishops have large incomes, and high rank: they are clergymen, but they rank on equal terms with the nobility. And under them, but elevated among the parochial clergy, are deans and canons, archdeacons and rural deans.

Which of these two systems is better? The republican, with its equality: or the hierarchical, with its gradations? Let one, in this unpractical reverie, put away, for the moment, all prepossession; and be absolutely free.

But better for whom?

For the individual clergyman I should unhesitatingly say Presbytery. If you cannot make all positions in the Church prizes: if prizes are rare, and growing rarer; a wise man will give up his hope of a great prize, for the assurance of a decent competency. If you go into a profession which has great prizes, and

don't get one, you go through life with the disheartening sense that you are a failure. If you don't feel this, your wife and children will. Some will fancy that the reason why you did not get a prize was that you did not deserve one. You know (of course) that this is not the case: but a cross-influence is exerted on all your doings by your sense that those around you think so. Then the absence of the great prizes of the Episcopal system cuts off the temptation dishonestly to trim, and hedge, and conceal one's convictions, and turn one's coat. It is good for a man to know that he has fairly got to the end of his tether, and that now all that remains for him is diligently to do his duty. It is a wretched thing, a sore temptation, a breaking strain on some men's honesty, to be always having an eye to preferment. Now, if there be no preferment, you cannot be having an eye to it. And though it must be very pleasant to be a bishop, specially at first, it may not be pleasant to find yourself under an old fellow-student, not a whit wiser, cleverer, or better than yourself, only a great deal more lucky.

But for the Institution, for the Church, for the maintenance of its worldly dignity, worldly wisdom would say that Episcopacy is beyond all question the better. The actual work of governing will be done by each form with fair equality: there is not much to choose between them. But if you refuse to think of the sufferings, sorrows, and disappointments of the individual clergyman, and think only of the worldly glory and standing of the Church, you will declare for Episcopacy. For you will attract men of greater talent, and higher standing, to the clerical office. They will come, hoping to draw prizes. They will probably draw blanks: but then they are in and cannot get out; and the institution gets the good

of their services. And then, in a hierarchical church, you are not sure, till you die, but what you may get a prize after all. Not so many years ago, we saw an eminent man, long passed by, made a bishop at the age of seventy. Of course it was a great shame, but still it was done. Not but the good man deserved the dignity: but he was past: it was too late. However, there he was, and his grandchildren will be able to say that he was a bishop. We must, in considering the matter, remember that the inhabitants of Great Britain are, for the most part, much impressed by worldly station. They reverence a dignity: a bishop is a dignity: and if the right man, he deserves to be so esteemed. It has happened, doubtless, that the fourpenny piece has now and then managed somehow to get itself stamped as a sovereign: and it passes as one. An Archbishop takes precedence of a duke. Such a man as Chalmers, albeit greater than half a dozen eighteenth-century archbishops rolled into one, is yet, through lack of social prestige, liable to be patronised by a squire, or a member of Parliament, or a small peer; but men and women, old and young, bow humbly to the archbishop, *His Grace*. And from the commonplace mortal, thus invested with a halo of glory, a dignity is reflected on the humblest cleric or layman in his communion. Even the bishop of an unendowed church, though poorly paid and without legal precedence, ranks very differently from an ordinary dissenting minister. The honoured name of the office has sometimes, as in the case of Bishop Wordsworth of St. Andrews, led men to accept it whose learning, devotion, and goodness marked them as worthy of the highest honour in any communion on earth.

A judicious defender of Episcopacy will not rest

the case for it on high grounds: anything but that. Let him make mention simply of the dignity that surrounds it in the eyes of the British generation. The biggest Presbyterian clergyman, Chalmers or Macleod, is a man for a country gentleman to honour by asking him to his house. He walks in to dinner behind the shabbiest honourable. The son of a decent shopkeeper, when made an archbishop, walks before a duke. Take any mortal, of good appearance and common sense: place him on that elevation, give him that rank and income, and most men and women will humbly bow to him. And, in truth, the man is exceptional in his good luck, however commonplace in his nature. A National Church, without a hierarchy, cannot socially hold its place in an aristocratic country. So, in our ideal National Church, let there be dignities, call them what you please. But it is just as well to use old familiar names. I did indeed once hear a great man say that it would remove the Scotch prejudice against Prelacy, if instead of calling a Church ruler a Bishop, you called him a Colonel. But though a great man, he appeared crotchety in a high degree. Of late, indeed, one has heard eminent Scotch clerics say that it would be a good thing to have *Superintendents*. What are Superintendents but Bishops? Not but what there is something in a name. Grammatically, an *Inquisitor* is merely an Enquirer. And a *Grand Inquisitor* is, of course, a specially patient and successful Enquirer, whose enquiries have resulted in great blessings to mankind, and in great enlightenment. Newton was a Grand Inquisitor: Spain never had a grander. And Bacon, in his most famous work, professes to point out the methods which a good Inquisitor should employ. As a *Pope*, too, means simply a Father, and the paternal affections were specially warm in Luther,

it might be said of him, with incontrovertible truth, that this world has seldom seen a more decidedly Popish man.

You do not expect, I suppose, to find or invent in this world any system against which no objection can be made. Those familiar with Presbytery and Episcopacy respectively know that each has its crying evils. But it does not follow that a system is bad on the whole though it has crying evils. Its advantages may be much greater. It is an inconvenience that a locomotive engine should get so very hot ; but you do not propose to do away with locomotive engines. The disadvantages of Presbytery are those of parliamentary government ; of government by a parliament that meets rarely, and for short times. A vulgar blatant demagogue may get the ear of the General Assembly ; and have a certain weight, not for the value of the opinions he expresses, but for the fluency, brass, and loudness of voice with which he expresses opinions worth nothing. Not less disagreeable than the blatant demagogue is the artful dodger. There is no other word for the thing. A politic and artful clergyman ; a puller of wires, a manager of committees, a getter of majorities, an earwigger of men in power ; in short, an ecclesiastical trickster ; however good his ends, I can regard with no feeling short of loathing. Yet Presbytery conduces to the development of the type. As for Episcopacy, there may be the Bishop governed by his wife or daughter : Sydney Smith knew of even a butler-bishop. And it is a sorry sight, the dropping-down-deadness of manner of some clerics before their diocesan. Apart from his dignity, he has so much to give away ! A poor man, with a large family, cannot but think how grand a thing it would be to have seven hundred and fifty pounds a year added to his income. And a bishop can sometimes

make canons ; and often bestows livings, specially upon his sons-in-law.

My subject is to be handled briefly. But the conclusion of the whole matter is, that in the ideal National Church, there should be as little governing as possible, unless by appeal to that law of the land which is open to all ; and that what governing is needful is best exercised by a hierarchy. A republican church must lose in an aristocratic country. Unquestionably, a republican church is the more rational and defensible institution ; but in this very imperfect state, something must be yielded to the prejudices of poor humanity. We know the race. A certain number of clergymen, with incomes of from five to fifteen thousand a year, each living in a palace, and maintaining something of baronial style, does unhappily make an institution more respected by average human nature.

A wise and eloquent writer describes a certain parish clergyman as preaching to his parishioners with all the weight of a man who kept his carriage-and-pair. A poor incumbent, with a hundred a year, told me but yesterday, with manifest pride, that the new rector of a certain parish had seven thousand a year of private means. What was that to him ? one thought ; but plainly it was much to him. If a man arrives at the door of a country church to preach, having walked five miles on a hot summer day, dusty and deliquescent, no matter how able and eloquent he may be, he will be somewhat cheaply estimated by certain rich and poor in that congregation that day. If he drive up in a handsome trap, drawn by a pair of well-bred animals ; if a staid and well-fed manservant carry the bag with his robes to the vestry ; the weight of his good counsels is much increased. You may refer, no doubt, to the instance of the Apostles. But things are entirely changed since then.

You may fancy I am speaking cynically, and not in entire sincerity and good faith. I cannot help that. And I conclude what I have to say at present with an extract from a speech once made in the General Assembly by that great and good man, Chalmers. *He* never said anything in deeper earnest.

It is quite ridiculous to say that the worth of the clergy will suffice to keep them up in the estimation of society. This worth must be combined with importance. Give both worth and importance to the same individual, and what are the terms employed in describing him? 'A distinguished member of society, the ornament of a most respectable profession, the virtuous companion of the great, and a generous consolation to all the sickness and poverty around him.' These, Moderator, appear to me to be the terms peculiarly descriptive of the appropriate character of a clergyman, and they serve to mark the place which he ought to occupy. But take away the importance, and leave only the worth, and what do you make of him?—what is the descriptive term applied to him now? Precisely the term which I often find applied to many of my brethren, and which galls me to the very bone every moment I hear it,—'*a fine body* ;' a being whom you may like, but whom I defy you to esteem: a mere object of endearment: a being whom the great may at times honour with the condescension of a dinner, but whom they will never admit as a respectable addition to their society. Now all that I demand from the Court of Teinds is, to be raised, and that as speedily as possible, above the imputation of being '*a fine body* ;' that they would add importance to my work, and give splendour and efficacy to those exertions which have for their object the most exalted interests of the species.

That is sound sense: not the less sound that it is playfully expressed. Dignities and dignitaries are desirable things: it is amusing to see how, where they are forbidden, Nature asserts herself: and you find men called *Right Reverend* who have not the smallest claim to the designation. It matters little by what name a dignity is called. And it must have the backing of some measure of worldly wealth, if it is to hold its own. I have seen, at a quasi-public dinner North of the Tweed, the poorest squire carefully provided for at the high table: while a learned

ecclesiastical dignitary, both personally and officially of as high place as we have, was left to struggle in with the ruck and to fight for sitting-room. This means a great deal. It is a trumpery straw: but it shows how a great wind is blowing. It is evil, where the Parson is In Contempt.

If some good men could take it in, it is wise to plead for a system on lowly grounds: specially when these are the only sound ones. There was no more eminent living Scotsman than one who once said to me (he was an elder of the Church \*), ' If you plead for a Hierarchy on grounds of expediency; its venerable associations, its social advantages in a country with great diversities of rank: I will take a Bishop to my arms to-morrow. *But*, if you tell me that Episcopacy is a vital thing, and that without it there is no Church, and there are no sacraments, I snap my fingers at you.'

More might be said. If you look deeper into Presbytery and Episcopacy, you will see how very little difference there is between them. There are the three things about the Government of a Church: The conferring of orders: The maintenance of discipline: The keeping of worldly standing. We say no more of the third: as to the second, the systems are nearly equal: and as to orders, the question is of the narrowest. In both, there is the laying on of hands: In both, not less than three, already ordained, confer full orders; one of the three presiding. The entire question is: Will it suffice that he who presides be *primus inter pares*, set over the rest for that hour and that duty: or must he be always set over and set apart, as one of a different order? That is all that keeps Presbytery and Prelacy apart, on the vital point. That is what keeps things so, that the two National Churches,

\* The late Lord President Inglis.

menaced by the same enemies, instead of standing shoulder to shoulder, are deeply divided ; and (to say the truth), in Scotland, are hostile powers.

A very great ecclesiastic once said to the writer, ' Is there no hope of their drawing nearer ? They will stand or fall together.' But after a little thought, he added, ' The practical difficulties are so great, that we can but wait God's will.'

One thing only I am sure of. If these difficulties are to be accommodated, it must be done by devout men, with souls unspoiled by Controversy, and lifted up by Prayer. Otherwise, it will never be done at all. And then, existing difficulties will be removed by the coming of a Change, which the writer hopes he may not live to see.

(1894.)

## II.—ST. ANDREWS AND ELSEWHERE :

### MEMORIES AND THUMB-NAIL SKETCHES.

#### ST. ANDREWS.

VERY many know the enthusiastic words in which Dean Stanley told of the indescribable charm of 'my own St. Andrews.' Just once did the writer speak to Carlyle, whom he found kindness itself. One sentence remains in vivid remembrance. 'Grand place St. Andrews. You have there the essence of all the antiquity of Scotland, in good and clean condition.' These were the words. By chance, yesterday, a letter was found, written by James T. Fields, the genial and eminent publisher of Boston, U.S.A. 'It seems like a dream sometimes that I have roamed round your most interesting old city, with good Robert Chambers to point out all the wonders of the place.' For poetic praise of 'fair St. Andrews' the days have been when one turned to *Marmion*. But for years past, never was city sung more charmingly than St. Andrews has been on the touching and beautiful page of Andrew Lang.

It is but a village town and population; some seven thousand souls. But not merely has St. Andrews the rank of a city, handed down from past centuries, when its population was greater absolutely, and

immensely greater in comparison with Edinburgh and Glasgow. It has the look of a city, a sacred and solemn city, seen either from far or near. John Stuart Mill did indeed tell the writer that he was disappointed with its modern look ; and the statement wrung the heart of dear Principal Shairp. But then the Lord Rector of the University explained that he had expected something like Augsburg or Nuremberg. 'The very ideal of a little University City,' was Mr. Froude's judgment, looking at it from the Eden, two miles out along the west sands. Mr. Froude had in his turn been elected Lord Rector, and had come to give his inaugural discourse. And never does the gray place take a more haunted aspect than when a bright September sunset shines on it across the famous Links, turning the ancient towers and ruins to a marvellous opal hue.

And its population is as exceptional as its look. It is amazing how many eminent persons abide in it, for a longer or shorter space, in the course of each year. But these are birds of passage : I speak of its regular inhabitants. It is the University that does it. Very many men of high mark have lectured in its class-rooms : and are laid to rest in the magnificent church-yard, hallowed by the ruins of two cathedral churches, and surrounded on two sides by the sea.

#### 'DEAR CITY OF YOUTH AND DREAM.'

It is a city of solemn ruins and ivied walls ; of innumerable ancient remembrances tragical and pleasant ; once of fiery storms and strifes, of heroic courage and martyr endurance, but now of academic quiet ; of scarlet gowns and black caps ; of dear associations in the mind of many a country clergyman, looking back through the softening haze of years on

the season of his college life. Thus was it first shown to the writer. It was here his father studied : what talks have I listened to, ever since I can remember, between men with gray heads, looking back with a fond enthusiasm on this home of their departed days ! . . .

It is a gray old place indeed ; and when you look along the chief street, looking towards the east, by winter moonlight, or in summer sunshine, its aspect is dreamy, as that of no other place the writer knows in this hard-working country of Liberal politics and literal sentiments. . . .

At sunset the level September sun falls brightly on the recent houses of light-coloured freestone and on the dark masses of the ancient ruins and spires. If you had walked out two miles to the west this afternoon, over a track of velvety turf, leading through sandy downs beside the sea, and then turned and looked back, you would have thought involuntarily of the imagery of the Apocalypse. For there indeed is a Golden City, bounded by sea of glass mingled with fire. . . .

The Archiepiscopal palace was a fortified castle, frowning sternly from a bare cliff rising from a lonely sea : able to stand a siege, as it had to do now and then. And the Cathedral, great in size and severe in the beauty of undecorated Gothic, stood boldly forth to the north-easter fresh from the German foam. A keen and sharp air must have been felt on many days, even by such as paced the cloisters ; and the Gregorian music of matins and vespers must have often been blended with the roar of the foaming waves.

#### ARCHBISHOP AND PRINCIPAL.

The parish church has a great history, stretching over many centuries : before I saw it : the reader will

have quite enough of its history hereafter, if all should go well. Yet one recollection comes capriciously back when I stand over the grave of Archbishop Sharp, slain cruelly at Magus Muir: one of three archbishops who rest in the church, which was their pro-cathedral: the magnificent cathedral having been ruined before their day. In carrying out certain repairs, it was needful to break into Archbishop Sharp's resting-place, which is only five feet below the pavement: a huge and costly monument was set over it, with a life-size statue of white marble. The doors of the church were carefully locked while the grave remained opened; and I staid beside it. But I at once sent over word to Principal Shairp, who claimed some kindred, and he speedily appeared. He pulled off his coat, and went down into the grave. It is a chamber, with sides and floor of polished stone. In a little, the Poet-Principal looked out, with eyes gleaming with excitement. He was covered over with red dust, and he held in his hand the jawbone of the murdered Prelate. With intense feeling he uttered these remarkable words, 'Wouldn't Stanley give his ears to be here!' Of course, we all knew well here the beloved Dean's interest in such a place: though surely he had tombs enough at Westminster. Specially we remembered a sentence uttered in our hearing more than once or twice: 'There is nothing that interests me so much as what may be called an ecclesiastical curiosity.' On one occasion, when the ultra-conservative Principal refused to kneel at prayers and stand at praise in the College Chapel, Stanley added in genial tones, 'I think Shairp is rapidly becoming an ecclesiastical curiosity.' Only Shairp and I were present: and Shairp listened with his pleasantest smile. Never man in this world had a pleasanter smile.

## THE WHYTE-MELVILLES.

John Whyte-Melville was the chief 'heritor' in the parish: that is, the greatest proprietor of land. His hospitable house, large, warm, home-like, comfortable, stood on a richly-wooded height in a beautiful park two miles from the city. His son, the distinguished novelist, made the name known to many who had never heard of the father: but the elder Whyte-Melville was a remarkable man. He was the ideal country gentleman, and he did the duties of his position to perfection. No duke, no prince, ever had 'the grand manner' more thoroughly than he; and this without a vestige of affectation. He was the most courteous of men. He was, as of course, the figurehead in all functions here. He was always ready with a graceful little speech, in which he never failed to say exactly the right thing. I never saw him ruffled but once. It was at a meeting of heritors, where he was naturally in the chair. One man was persistently obstructive and stupid. The chairman bore it long: but finally he turned to me (I was sitting at his left hand), and said in an audible whisper in which dignity and asperity were blended, 'That man is the greatest fool that God Almighty ever made.' He was long Master of the Fox Hounds, and by a life of great regularity and abundant outdoor exercise, he lived in high health and with every sense entire to close on eighty-seven. Twice in his life, he told me, he had visited a dentist: fifty years intervened between the visits. Six months before his death, he would go round the Links twice a day (a walk of nine miles) three days a week. The Links are sometimes a place of awful language: such are the temptations of golf. But the worst the fine old man was ever known to say was 'God bless my soul.'

The sentiment is most becoming. I never knew his wife, Lady Catherine, till she had grown old: the most charming of old ladies. They lived together sixty-two years: all their children went before them. She was thoroughly an Englishwoman, and was never quite acclimatised here: yet, singularly, no one ever played Scottish music to such perfection. She was the daughter, sister, and aunt, of three successive Dukes of Leeds: the well-known S. G. O. was her cousin-german. It was a black day when a telegram came to the Club, that the novelist had died in the hunting-field: and a strange irony. For his novels had been the glorification of all that concerns sport, and chiefly of horses: and the grand horseman met his death under circumstances in which even so awful a rider as Bishop Wilberforce should have been safe. The question was, who should tell the father, who was there as usual, ere going home to dinner. At last Tulloch was persuaded to take him into a little room and break the terrible news. 'Poor George,' was all the dear man said. Then, without a word, he got into his carriage which was waiting at the door, and drove away into the winter night to tell the poor mother. She never held up her head again; and was gone in a few weeks' time.

#### MR. FROUDE'S LORD-RECTORSHIP.

The great event of the early spring of 1869 was the coming of Mr. Froude to be installed as Lord Rector. The students had elected him in November before. Clearly comes back the bright frosty morning on which William Tulloch, the Principal's eldest son, who was to become an eminent minister of the Church and the writer's dearest friend of the next generation, hurried in with the pleasant news. Froude came to

the Principal's house on Thursday, March 18. He was installed on the Friday. And on Saturday morning he came to our house to stay. On the Thursday afternoon I walked over the Links with Froude and Tulloch. It was here, first looking at St. Andrews from two miles' distance, that Froude uttered the sentence which I have quoted too often: 'The very ideal of a little University town!' At two o'clock on Friday was the inauguration. It was in the upper hall of the University Library. All was as usual. There was a great crowd. Before the function began, the red-robed students (Sir Daniel Sandford said *Discipulos rerum dominos gentemque togatam*) sang their usual songs: which always warm a weary heart to hear. Froude's address took an hour and a half. It was very admirable and very well delivered. Not a trace of nervousness. But I always remember when going with Froude to the Music Hall in Edinburgh, where he was to deliver the opening lecture for the season of the Philosophical Institution to all the culture of the Northern Metropolis, how I asked him, drawing near the crowded scene, 'Don't you feel nervous?' and got the answer, given quite unaffectedly, 'What is there to be nervous about?' Surely a happy man. Froude had appointed Dr. John Skelton of Edinburgh his assessor in the University Court. The address over, Tulloch, Skelton, Froude, and I walked over the Links to the Eden. At seven there was dinner in the Senate Hall. Only the Professors were present, the members of the University Court, Dr. Chambers, and myself. And before ten Froude and Skelton, Tulloch, Baynes and Campbell, came over to our house, where there was a great gathering of students, including all St. Leonard's Hall. Froude had not quite Stanley's art, which we were yet to see, of saying a word to every

youth separately; but he made himself specially pleasant. I do not forget his remark: 'Those youths are exactly like Oxford undergraduates.' But though by no means necessarily the cleverest of our young men, they were mainly those whom fortune had treated with most favour.

The Saturday was a day of remarkable interest. The forenoon was given to the Castle and Cathedral. In the afternoon we drove out to Magus Muir, where Archbishop Sharp was murdered. The party included Froude, Tulloch, Shairp, Baynes, Campbell, and myself. It was a lovely sunshiny day. Mr. Whyte-Melville met us at the fatal spot. It is a thick wood now. A rough pyramid marks the traditional spot where the Archbishop perished. It was set up by Mr. Whyte-Melville, to whom the ground belongs. He asked Dean Stanley to write a suitable inscription: and the typical Broad-Churchman, sympathising to a certain degree with all earnest conviction, devised one which was equally complimentary to the murdered Archbishop and to the well-meaning though mistaken individuals who removed him. The laird, however, did not approve; and a Latin inscription was written which was adopted. I know who wrote it: but I name him not. For even I could discern that it is not creditable to Scottish scholarship. A year ago I drove Mr. Buckle, Editor of *The Times*, and a late Fellow of All Souls, to the place: and he pointed out three specially glaring blunders. One of these was made by the mason: but though it utterly destroys the sense, and in fact makes the inscription nonsense, it has been allowed to remain year after year. Another *may* have been made by the mason: it defies all grammar. The third unquestionably came of the author's ignorance of a technicality. When you give a Bishop's title in Latin, you use the adjective, not

the noun. In English you use the noun. Thus, old Henry of the West signed himself *H. Exeter*. But his successor was *F. Exon*. That is, *Exoniensis*. *Ebor*, in the signature of York, does not stand for *Eboracum*, but for *Eboracensis*. It used to be *A. C. London*. It is now, in more scholarly fashion, *F. Londin*. That is, *Londiniensis*. The thing became very plain in the quaint signature of the Bishops of Rochester. Rochester was *Roffa*. The signature is *Roffen*. To many it is unintelligible. I have seen divers letters come, addressed *A. W. Roffen, Esq.* My only excuse for this display of cheap learning is, that I have found hardly any one in this country who possessed it. Indeed, a Professor of Criticism once told me that the signature of York was what he called *Eborācum*. But a spiteful critic of former days, proposing to explain what is meant by works of necessity and mercy, said that if Professor Snooks had to read an easy passage of Greek, it would be a work of necessity for him to use a lexicon, and a work of mercy to give him one.

I should have said that before the little omnibus came to carry us to Magus Muir, I took Froude a few yards to the dwelling of that prince of amateur photographers who had done Kingsley so well: Dr. Adamson. Dr. Adamson was ready: and in just twenty minutes he took Froude nine times. The first eight were bad: Froude looked self-conscious, and not himself. But just as we were going, resigned to failure, Dr. Adamson said, 'I have one plate more; let us try again.' Froude, quite wearied, sat down, never thinking of what he looked like: and in half-a-minute we had quite the best likeness of him I have ever seen. Near Kingsley's, it looks down on me now: as it has for twenty-two years. But the hair is black; and the beautiful face is the face of early middle age. . . .

Returning from Magus Muir, we all walked from Mount Melville gate, two miles. Close to St. Andrews, we had a specimen of Shairp's peculiar humour. We met a good lady, a strong Episcopalian. Her husband was indeed a Canon of York: a Canon with work and pay, be it understood. Let it be interjected, that certain men, supposed to have been concerned in the murder of Sharp, were hanged on the spot, and buried there. Approaching the lady, with a look of utmost simplicity, and as one sure of entire sympathy, Shairp said, 'We have just been out at the graves of the Martyrs: the good men who are buried at Magus Muir.' The lady listened with interest, not quite comprehending. Shairp went on, 'Most interesting place: the good men, I mean, who killed Archbishop Sharp.' The lady vouchsafed no reply whatever: but with a glance of extreme scorn she rapidly walked away.

That was a quiet evening: and next day, for the second time under our roof, Froude passed through a Scottish Sunday. But he did not find it by any means austere. There was a day on which Froude and I, at the hospitable table of Mr. William Longman in London, met, among many more, Sir Travers Twiss and his wife. The lady assured us that in Scotland, on Sundays, all the blinds were drawn down and every house was as though one lay dead in it. But the beloved historian found that the fact was otherwise. In the morning he went to the parish church, and sat in the magistrates' seat beside the Lord Provost. These dignitaries have handsome chairs of oak and velvet. At Edinburgh, Froude had complained of the absence of common prayer. Now, his standpoint was changed. He thought there was too much: saying that a sermon, wherein one human being told to others what he had thought upon the

gravest matters, was a reality; but that worship tended to grow in sorcery, and to unduly exalt a priestly caste. In any case, he listened to the sermon with the utmost attention: unlike a very great Edinburgh reviewer, of whom a friend said, 'How can that man go to church? His critical faculty is sharpened to that degree, that to listen to any ordinary sermon would be torture to him!' Froude corrected divers proofs while his friend went to afternoon church: and then, with the writer's daughter and himself, went off for a long walk across the Links. Froude's kindness to children has ever been remarkable. I never forget how in Edinburgh, years before, coming down in the morning I found the great man on his knees, intently helping a little boy to pile up a huge castle of bricks: which indeed attained to eight feet in height. Nor will that little boy forget, while he lives, how when Edinburgh was grandly illuminated on the evening of the wedding of the Prince of Wales, the historian carried the little man on his shoulder through all the chief streets. Froude had said that he should like to hear his remarks on what he saw. But, as is the way of this world, Froude was disappointed. The boy was stricken stony, and spake no word at all.

#### CHARLES KINGSLEY AGAIN.

His little ways come back. One morning we were sitting by the window of his room, he looking out on the broad bay, just under it: talking eagerly of all human things. A little expanse of carefully mown grass stretched from under his window to the edge of the cliff, fifty feet perpendicular. Here he read his letters that day, eight or ten: and then, vehemently condemning some iniquity, he carefully tore them into

little fragments and cast the great handful from the window. His friend, dominated by a painful tidiness, could but think that each separate fragment must be gathered up again from the trim little green. . . .

Parting, in thought, from that beloved and most vivacious man, how his face and figure are present on this dismal Equinox of howling hurricane, September 21, 1891, after these twenty-four years! The tears come to one's eyes recalling such little incidents. One evening in our house, when only ourselves were there, a pretty young sister-in-law of whom Kingsley grew very fond (she was just eighteen), having sung another song, without a word began 'Oh Mary, go and call the cattle home.' But she had not finished the line when the poet started up from his chair, and with his old-fashioned courtesy, with many bows and apologies for interrupting her, begged her to stop: saying that he could not bear to hear his own song sung. I do not know if Kingsley was always in this mind. Burns, on the contrary, was always greatly pleased to hear his own songs sung. Does the reader know a little poem which Kingsley gave to *Fraser* in the old days when *Fraser* had its special flavour, and its set of contributors who never wrote anywhere else? It is called 'The Knight's Leap at Altenahr.' It seems to me as characteristic and as perfect a piece as Kingsley ever wrote.

#### THE DEAN OF WESTMINSTER.

The first of many visits of the beloved Dean Stanley was on August 29 in this first year (1866). But though he had been repeatedly at our house in Edinburgh, he never till now wrote his letters at my writing-table. I was much impressed with the great man's ways. The writing-pad on this table is of white blotting-

paper, but has an outer skin of cartridge paper. Regularly as the Dean did me the great honour of writing where I write now, he turned his letter over and sought to dry the ink on the cartridge paper. The letter, already nearly illegible, became entirely so. And of the many proofs he corrected here, few there were which were not treated in like manner. Even a suffering compositor must have loved Stanley. But both his manuscript and his proofs were received at the printing office with howls. It was a Wednesday : and Mr. Rodger of St. Leonard's and I had afternoon service regularly in the beautiful little chapel of St. Salvator's College. I tried to persuade Stanley to preach the sermon. A few years later, he preached continually in Scotch churches : but he would not venture now. I went away sorrowfully at 3 P.M., leaving him still writing his letters, and I tremble to think what they must have been like when I was not there to intercept each as he was in the act of turning it down. Some human beings are very lacking in resources. But after a while, the thought suggested itself to both at once to make the pad exclusively of blotting-paper. The Dean was a very great man. So was Isaac Newton. And you remember how he cut in his study door a large hole for his cat and a small one for the kitten.

### A LATER VISIT.

The next day, Saturday, was wintry : snow falling and a bitter east wind. But Sunday, March 18, was a beautiful, sunshiny, frosty day. The Dean preached at the parish church in the afternoon. Long before the bells began, the church was quite full. When the service began, the congregation crowded pews and passages, and must have numbered nearly 3,000. I arrayed the Dean in his robes : he could not have

put them on himself. He wore the black silk gown, as we do, and the bands : the Oxford D.D. hood : also what we do not wear, a broad scarf of crêpe, and the Order of the Bath, as he sat in his robes before a great fire in the vestry, like one to whom warmth was life, waiting the beginning of the service. It was strange to see the beautiful face, with its delicate features usually so mobile, fixed in unwonted seriousness. The record of the times says 'he looked beautiful.' It was now that as the modest procession was moving along through the church before the Dean, an old woman, with a huge umbrella in her hand, joined herself to it and followed the Dean closely, with loudly tramping feet. Solemnity was destroyed, but the Dean was delighted. 'Could not have happened except in Scotland,' he said. We gave the Dean some characteristic Scottish church music : 'Such Pity as a Father hath,' the twenty-third psalm, and 'O God of Bethel,' sung by that great congregation, in thunderous tone. What the prayer book is to a devout Anglican, these are to a Scottish ear and heart. Stanley did not forget the last named : and years after, when a good many Scotch friends went with him to a grand evening service in the nave of Westminster, amid the magnificent choral worship, rendered by a triple choir, it came in, touching beyond words, and thrilled the Scotch hearts through. When the Dean entered the pulpit, amid an audible hush, he read 'Lord of all power and might,' which he called Jenny Geddes's collect. For it is this which provoked that heroic woman to cast her stool at the Dean of Edinburgh's head : she intelligently regarding the beautiful words as no better than the Mass. I do not know whether he kept it up : but Stanley said then that he never would preach in the kirk without saying that collect.

## HOW THINGS GO.

It is not the least like books,—like most books, I mean,—how things go: yet the homely pathos is deep. It was only a little boy, nine years old, who had lain in his bed dying for three months past, who one evening last week said to his mother, thinking of a kind and hard-working neighbour close at hand, ‘I’m thinking she’ll be rather dull to-night.’ ‘Why?’ ‘Because they’ll be taking away her Man to-morrow.’ And indeed next day the good man was to be carried along South Street to his rest in a solemn procession: the coffin laid upon a piece of field-artillery: the pipers playing *The Flowers of the Forest*, and the brass instruments taking up their turn with the unapproachable Dead March. For he was an enthusiastic volunteer, and a grand piper: in addition to being a truly good man who left a blameless record, going at fifty years. But, though there was all kind sympathy in the little heart, the thin dark face brightened a little, as the dying boy went on to say he was to be carried down to see the grand funeral. He had a little armchair of his own: and he told his mother he had got two good neighbours, ‘strong women,’ to take each an arm and carry him down-stairs. And so he fell asleep. But he was not to hear the pipes or see the cannon with its six horses. At two in the morning he awoke and said, ‘Mother, I think I’ll soon be perfectly well.’ The poor mother knew. She put into his lips a little spoonful of tea; and the boy turned his head on the pillow and spoke no more. But he had spoken more wisely than he knew. ‘Is it well with the child? It is well.’ Perfectly well. . . .

He was waiting his turn, little Tommy, when the good piper was laid to his rest. You remember poor

Robert Burns, at the very last : 'Don't let the awkward squad fire over me.' And sure enough, with dropping shots, irregularly fired, they bade our great poet farewell. There was nothing of the kind here. The three volleys were given, as with one sound each : awkwardness is not our characteristic, but soldierly alertness. And where St. Regulus has looked down for eight hundred years on earth hallowed by Christian burial for centuries before the old tower arose, once more the words, said times beyond numbering, *Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of His great mercy* : the magnificent words, worthy to stand, not fearing comparison, even in a service which has the inestimable advantage of consisting, to the extent of above three-fourths, of Holy Scripture itself.

The boy's turn came soon. I buried them both. The first Thursday and the first Saturday of this Lenten-tide. And people who neglect to fast, or even to repent in dust and ashes (at one time more than another), cannot fail to mark the lengthening light : with its vague cheer in a sorrowful time : with its vague promise of something which is not likely to be. . . .

#### A LITTLE COMPANY.

. . . It was about this time that I did the burial service (as I have done many times) over a poor suicide. There is such a thing as Luck in this world : and mine has been to know more than my share of those who have thus passed from this life. I have known, well, more than thirty suicides : men and women. Some of them were as good and kindly souls as I hope to see. Hardly any of them could be said to be insane : they were perfectly like unto other people. But the hour came in which reason toppled over : and

they went. One was a little boy, who thought he had got into such an awful trouble that he could never be right any more. If he had only come and told me! Everything could have been set straight in about a minute. But that is just what he could not do. I remember, long ago, in my first parish, how a poor old man whose old wife had hanged herself said to me (trying to comfort him) that there was a text in the Bible which said, 'The common damned shun their society:' and he could not get over that. I explained to him that the line does not occur in Holy Scripture, but only in Blair's *Grave*: that it was quite without authority beyond that of Mr. Blair himself: that it was a most presumptuous statement to make: and that in my judgment it was false, outrageously false. But I fear the good old man was not comforted. In those days, anything which stood in print had, for many people, authority far beyond the weightiest word of any one living. And my authority was small, for though I was incumbent of a parish of 5,000 souls, my years were twenty-five, and my faith was untried. I thought myself quite as old as anybody need be; but now, looking back, I am aware that I was (for my place) very young. It would be very strange indeed to see that little company of thirty-two or thirty-three here in this quiet room together; all ranks, all ages, both sexes: they had felt the 'blackness of darkness' which may one day come down on any. We were great purists in the matter of giving an author's exact words who prepared the *Scottish Hymnal*: but not a man durst propose to give one line of Faber's famous hymn as he wrote it: 'All journeys end in welcome to the weary.' It would have made short shrift of the volume when it came to be dealt with judicially, and how dare we speak beyond what is

revealed? Yet those who have had like experience to mine have cause for an infinite trust in infinite mercy, and perfect understanding of us poor men.

### THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE.

On Candlemas-day, February 2, 1886, there entered this study something which will abide as long as I do; and which I trust will be taken care of afterwards for that it was dear to me. A beautiful elm-tree, one of three standing in front of the beloved little St. Mary's Church, was blown down on a stormy December night in 1883. I had watched it continually, as a lover of trees watches a fine tree in a place where such are few: and I knew well its look in each of the seasons. Specially, at a summer evening service, on one of the few Sundays in the long year on which you might sing Bishop Walsham How's hymn, *Summer suns are glowing*, without its seeming absurd, I used to see through a stained window the branches gently waving in the soft breeze of July. I miss that tree more than I can tell any one. But it had fallen, and it had to go. Just as close as might be to the roots, a slice was cut across the grain of the wood. Two years of seasoning, and the slice was deemed fit to be made into a table which was carried into the room during work, and set down at the left hand of my writing-table, where a great many things are put upon it daily. On the day on which it came, it suggested a paper which in due time appeared in *Longman*, bearing the title *That Elm*. And a curious fate befell it, which gives it special interest to me. On June 29 in this year, I was travelling by the Caledonian Railway from Edinburgh to the South. It was a wonderfully

bright and beautiful day. At Lockerbie the train stopped a minute: and an old gentleman descended from the next compartment of the carriage, and soon re-entered it. A little man, extremely upright and active. The face seemed familiar, but I was not sure. At Carlisle we had seventeen minutes: and I ventured to ask him if he were not *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, though unseen till now, had sent me all the works he published for many years, and had written to me very many long and kind letters. Notable among these prized volumes is the grand illustrated edition of the *Autocrat*, bearing the inscription: *A. K. H. Boyd: with the kindest regards of Oliver Wendell Holmes, September 1866.*

I received the most cordial of welcomes, and we had pleasant talk through that wait at Carlisle. He had just been made LL.D. of Edinburgh, and was going to Oxford to be made D.C.L. . . . The next stop was at Preston: twenty-five minutes. He talked brightly all that time, and it chanced I had the July *Longman* with me containing *That Elm*. I gave him the magazine: but he would not look into it till we started again. And singularly, that same number contained an article entitled, *Oliver Wendell Holmes*. But he said he would not look at that: not on any account. The next stop was at Crewe, where we parted: he for Oxford, I for Wolverhampton and Lichfield. And here he gave me back my *Longman*. . . . He had written at the end of it, in a large clear hand, as follows:—

‘ Read in the train from Edinburgh to Oxford, June 29th, 1886, by Oliver Wendell Holmes: in full sympathy with the writer.

‘ Elm measured at Oxford 25 feet 6 inches in clear girth. I never saw but one American elm reach 23

reet. I have seen them reach 120 feet from bough end to bough end. O. W. H.'

## A STUDENT OF DIVINITY.

Circumstances hold Scotch students down. They have to work so terribly hard at tutoring to support themselves. I could tell pathetic stories. On a snowy March morning in 1870 I went with Tulloch to perform the service at the funeral of a student of divinity. His father and sisters had come from far away in the Highlands. The service was done; and then in a small procession, in a bitter icy wind, at 7.45 A.M., we followed the hearse to the railway station. What self-denial had brought him so far through his course! What hopes died with him! and how heroically the youth had fought against failing health, God help him! It was *Saturday morning* when we went with him so far towards his grave: he had taught his pupils as usual on *Wednesday evening*. That is to say, he died upon his feet: he died working: he died without a word to vex those at home. There died a hero!

## NOT A SPECIALLY REVERENT COUNTRY.'

This is not a specially reverent country. Three hundred and fifty years of a republican Church have left their trace. Odd incidents have come within one's knowledge. The Lord Provost of a city which I do not name was one day walking along its chief street, when he met a man of humble estate but of self-sufficient nature. This person approached the chief magistrate, and said, in a loud voice, 'Did you say that you thought' — no matter what? 'Yes! I did,' was the reply. 'Then,' said the worthy man,

in truculent manner, ‘then you’re a doomed man’: and departed. The incident was characteristic of the country where it befell.

I look back over twenty-seven years to an interview which quite interested me. I was passing through a quiet street in St. Andrews, when a worthy man accosted me. He was of lowly degree, and I had even been able to be helpful to him in a way which I will not indicate, but which commonly leaves some sense of obligation. In an up-lifted voice, and with a manner approaching the threatening, he uttered these words: I hear them yet:

‘What gart ye bring a Dean to preach in the Toon Kirk on Sabbath?’

I have often said that nothing is to be regarded as impertinent which is not designed to be so. So I answered meekly: ‘My good man, I might refuse to answer a question put to me in that tone, and tell you that it is entirely for myself to decide who shall preach for me in the parish church.

‘But instead of that, I will tell you why I brought Dean Stanley to preach:

‘I.—Dean Stanley is one of the greatest men in the great Church of England.

‘II.—He has repeatedly shown himself a warm friend of the Kirk of Scotland.

‘III.—He has for many years been a specially kind friend to myself.

‘IV.—I thought his preaching would interest many people, and I seem to have thought right, for about three thousand people came to hear him. All the passages were crammed.

‘V.—These were my reasons for bringing the Dean to preach. And I shall bring him again just as often as I can.’

My friend listened critically. He weighed my

words. Then he answered firmly: 'I dinna approve ava' o' ye bringin' a Dean to preach in the Toon Kirk.'

Then he departed. For some time he ceased to come to church when I preached. I had never beheld him in church, and knew not where he sat in the considerable congregation, and so missed him not. But a forward busybody 'thought it his duty' (so he said) to inform me of this distressing desertion. And I thought to myself that it would be a peculiar thing to minister in a Scotch kirk after Disestablishment. If a humble parishioner thus addressed a parish-minister, whose living was absolutely independent of the congregation and parish, how would things be when he was one of those that paid you? At present, the minister is still set over the parish. How, if he were set *under* it? My father told me that an excellent dissenting minister in Ayrshire said to him that having once replied to his 'managers' (well so-called) that he really could not do something they proposed, a chief man among them shook a threatening fist, and exclaimed 'We'll starve you, sir.' I relate the fact exactly as it was.

#### PRINCIPAL TULLOCH: FEBRUARY 13, 1886.

... I have lingered upon these incidents; however, I now come to the day when the heaviest blow fell upon St. Andrews which has fallen since I knew it. And none so heavy can fall in my time.

Principal Tulloch had been sent to Torquay, and was there in the house of Dr. Ramsay: for many years a picturesque figure at Holyrood and elsewhere during the General Assembly: Purse Bearer to the High Commissioner. Of course, Dr. Ramsay was an old friend of the Principal's. We were all anxious.

Principal Tulloch was not sixty-three: and once before he had come back from Torquay perfectly well. On Sunday, February 7, I had ministered at the dedication of St. George's-in-the-Fields, at Glasgow: a fine church, though of classic style. I had got home on Monday, 'awfully weary'; and was resting when a telegram came from the Principal's daughter who was with him. It said that her father was very ill: worse than they knew at home: and asked me to beg her mother to go to Torquay at once. I went over to St. Mary's College, and asked first to see a married daughter who was at home. One felt under what unexpressed menace that household had been living, when first the daughter and then the mother hurried in with the same cry, '*I know he's dead.*' They were shown the telegram: it was not so bad as that. And next morning, in the bitter frost of an awful season, they set off in the dark and travelled for twenty-four hours. As the gathering weakness came over Tulloch, the pathetic cry of *Jeanie, Jeanie*, had been constant. But when his good angel came, though he was but half-conscious, the heart-breaking words ceased. This was on Wednesday morning. His two sons, William and Frank, had arrived from Scotland. For a day there seemed a gleam of hope. But it passed: and in the early morning of Saturday, February 13, 1886, he was gone. . . . I cannot go back on that time. Everything one wrote for months had the sense of loss. It was as when Arnold went from Rugby. There was but one feeling everywhere. On Monday afternoon I went with Frank Tulloch to the Cathedral ground, in which a spot for his father's grave was chosen, one which has become familiar to many, on the lower terrace in the new ground. A great cross of granite has been set over it. There was the brightest sunshine as we stood at the

place, and the sea below was beautifully blue: 'The sea he was so fond of,' his son said. . . .

Thursday, February 18, was the funeral day.

Nor has any living person seen in St. Andrews so striking a procession as passed along our fine South Street under the windows of the desolate home, eastward that day. The quaint robes of students and professors—our own, and many from far away: and the boy who came at thirteen to St. Andrews, was carried through characteristic St. Andrews to his rest: not through modern streets such as you may find anywhere. I do not know what grand processions may have swept along that street in ages gone. Perhaps when Robert the Bruce came from Bannockburn to the dedication of the Cathedral things were statelier. But never was there deeper feeling nor truer mourning, never since gray St. Andrews was young. . . .

I see plainly, to-day, the gloomy street, the dark sky, the vested procession. Neither rain nor snow fell as yet. I hastened on by another way, and was at the new gate in time. All the service as usual. Just as the words *Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of His great mercy to take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother hence departed*, the windows of heaven were opened and a tremendous blast of drizzling sleet poured down; and went on to grow into a heavy snowstorm. So we left him.

#### A FIRST SCHOOLMASTER.

Not many men who have reached sixty-five years are permitted to pay a visit to their very first instructor. That touching experience was this year (1890) permitted to me.

. . . Even as a boy at the Academy under Doctor Memes, who had in him some of the makings of a

great teacher, I remember well how one read famous lines of Byron and wondered whether they said true : ' Dear the school-boy spot, we ne'er forget, though we are there forgot.' I know now that they are true. There is to me a glamour about Ayr : a light as of a summer sunset over that part of central Ayrshire which was of old called Kyle. . . . I was taken upstairs to the room where my dear old instructor sat, alone. He was eighty-seven : very frail ; but memory, hearing, every faculty, were entire. Seldom have I met heartier welcome. Strange, an old man, to see him who taught me when I was seven years of age : who began me with the Rudiments ! ' Do you remember *Penna, Pennae?*' Perfectly ; and all the departed life and the departed people. Mr. McRae had the genius to communicate knowledge in an interesting way, beyond any teacher I have ever known. But when I spoke warmly, as I felt, the old man shook his head, and said : ' I often think I have been very inefficient ! ' It was a very sad day to me and many more when he left my father's parish for a better place ; and it was strange when I came to be minister of Newton to find Mr. McRae there, in charge of a great school of a new generation. It was touching, indeed, when on the day I was ordained and ' inducted,' he made a speech at the regulation dinner-party in the evening, and said : ' I hope he may have as much pleasure in teaching me, as I used to have in teaching him.' . . . ' You have always been rising ' were his words, as he held my hand, parting for the last time. He was eighty-seven, I sixty-five. And when he added he had always watched me, he said true. So I came away.

I cannot but add, though the reader may smile at it, just a line to say how touching that interview was, and how thankful I was that I had thus gone to see the dear old man. For I found after he was dead, how

unduly he had valued my visit : also how he thought I was even as the boy he knew. It brought the tears to my eyes when I was told how he spoke to certain of his special friends, of that November morning. ' He came into my room and took my hand in both his, and said ' My dear old master ! ' It was not much to do, but it cheered up the failing heart. And I would have gone many miles to do so.

#### MR. ANDREW LANG, A GIFFORD LECTURER.

Quite the outstanding feature in the life of St. Andrews, entering on 1889, was the delivery of the Gifford Lectures by Mr. Andrew Lang. As we in this city are specially proud of this brilliant writer, holding that we in a measure ' raised ' him, and are entitled to credit for all he does, it is to be admitted that, in token of affection, he is always called *Andrew Lang*. This has ever been. Many years ago, coming up from the Club one evening with Tulloch, a young man of very striking appearance, dark and keen, walked rapidly by us. He had left this University before I came to St. Andrews ; and in answer to the question who he was, Tulloch's statement was ' That's Andrew Lang.' Lord Gifford, a Scotch Judge, who suffered much from sceptical doubts and wished to deliver others from them, left £80,000, the interest to be applied in maintaining theological lectureships in the four Scotch Universities. The office is held for two years ; the lecturer may be re-elected. At Glasgow, Max Müller had two terms of office. The Judge desired that a number of able men should apply their minds to the contemplation of this universe, in the hope that light might be brought to darkened souls, and assurance to perplexed. I cannot but say that the lecturers, in several cases, appear to me to have been

eminently successful in bringing their hearers to the state of mind from which Lord Gifford designed to deliver them. The resultant conclusion, in more than one case, has been briefly this: *Nobody knows anything at all about the matter.* I should say that Professor Flint's Baird Lectures on Theism are much liker what the Judge wanted, than any of the courses which have yet been delivered under the Gifford Bequest.

Mr. Lang gave his Introductory Lecture in St. Salvator's Hall on Thursday, January 17, at 5 P.M. There was a great crowd: which (as weeks went over) gradually lessened till the attendance was small. There was a procession of Professors. The lecture was a very remarkable one. There was an extraordinary amount of recondite knowledge. There was a wonderful brightness and liveliness of treatment. In a clear, high-pitched voice, heard in every corner, and without a shade of nervousness, the lecturer went on: and held breathless attention. There was abundance of applause, and the occasional hearty peal of laughter. I heard two of each three lectures this season; and nearly as many in the next. Sometimes they were read. Much oftener they were spoken from notes. But though treating matters where vague extempore talk was excluded, and entire accuracy of statement was essential, the lecturer was always equal to his work. Indeed, as he went on, week after week, the impression of his marvellous power was deepened. And though Mr. Lang has long studied the matters on which he commonly lectured, it must have been unaccustomed work to address a large mixed audience, of men and women, undergraduates and grown-up and aged folk, in this particular way. 'Very clever'; 'wonderfully bright': is the brief record written at the time, on returning from hearing Mr. Lang. Yet the dreariest Professor of Divinity never filled his

prelection fuller of weighty thought and rare learning. I never, besides, was more impressed than at this time, with the fact how natural it is to suppose that what is sparkling and effervescent must be lacking in weight: that what is brilliant cannot be solid. 'Wonderfully smart, but very slight,' one often heard: when the lecture had in truth been as massive as if given by Dr. Dryasdust. One felt that in this world it is not safe to be too bright. And brightness of thought, and a certain lightness of touch in speaking of all things, are characteristic of our distinguished Gifford Lecturer. Yet it must be said, that the occasional bit of serious counsel and deep feeling came home in a singular way. No preacher, designedly seeking to influence and help, could have quite so startlingly impressed a congregation, as did Mr. Lang, notably in his last lecture: when, as though in spite of himself, he got at the conscience and heart of all. One thought, 'Now this is not said because it is his business to say it: it is forced out of him.' And I can testify how seriously he impressed certain souls, which would have put Mr. Moody and Mr. Spurgeon contemptuously aside; ay, and would have felt that even Caird went by them and hit them not.

### CANON LIDDON.

He did not belong to our division of the Church Catholic. He did not recognise us as within the Church Catholic at all: any more than his friend, Cardinal Newman, recognised *him* as being within it. But the man's sweet nature quite did away the offence of his views: and he had no warmer friends than some of us in the Church of Scotland. Twice he visited St. Andrews. He never saw it but in blazing sunshine. Each time, with profound interest, he went over every

corner in this historic church : which, even in its present degradation, was a thousand times as much to him as the most beautiful brand-new one. Each time he said, solemnly, how he prayed for the day when he might preach from this pulpit. On each occasion he entered it, and looked at the church from it, in silent prayer. Well I knew what he was asking for ! I see the beautiful face, when we had climbed St. Regulus together under a glorious September sun, the bright sea stretching from our feet into infinity, and the gray ruins by. ‘A sacred place,’ he said. In one of his latest letters to me he said, ‘I pray that the Scotch may have the grace to set in order the things that have been wanting to them ever since John Knox has been in authority—beyond the Tweed.’ But he added, ‘In saying this I rejoice to remember how *very much* we have in common : and shall have, I trust, in life, and in death, and beyond.’ To which we would all say, Amen !

A socially-pushing Scot, the son of a minister or elder of the Kirk, flippantly unchurching or vilipending the Church of his fathers, I will never hold any terms with. Nor will I with a half-educated Englishman, grossly defective in the simple morality of the Decalogue: yet who will not pass before an empty altar without ostentatiously bowing, looking sharply whether I see him : and who hastens to express his opinion that a ‘Presbyterian can’t possibly get to Heaven.’ But the dear, saintly, profoundly-learned Liddon : solemnly holding a certain ecclesiastical theory as demonstrably God’s truth, and every now and then earnestly and affectionately seeking to bring a Scottish brother into better things than he meanwhile knew : could one closely know such a man without venerating and loving him ? Looked nearly into, how little the point of vital difference. In either National Church,

the highest orders are given by the laying-on of the hands of at least three, ordained already by ordained men, and these ordained in long succession back to the first of all. Must the man who presides at an ordination be one permanently set in a higher place, and called a Bishop ? Or will it suffice that he be set on high, *prelatus*, for that day and that duty ; and called a Moderator ? The two Establishments are not in communion : sorrowful to say. And this is all that keeps them apart. As good Archbishop Tait once said to me, ' Could you not have a permanent Moderator of Presbytery, who would preside at all ordinations ? Such a man would be vitally a Bishop ; and would satisfy the extremest South of the Tweed.'

#### INCIDENT.

Now a little example of that homely tragedy of which one sees so much. A young girl whom I had prepared for her first communion, had come back from Edinburgh, dying, and wished to see me. The family had moved into another parish : and we are very particular about these things : but I asked leave of the parish-minister, and it was given at once and of course. On Friday, October 10, a lovely, bright day, I walked slowly up-hill reading Bishop Wordsworth's charge, just published ; and five miles off found the cottage, and the poor consumptive girl in her bed. I have seldom seen a living creature so worn to a shadow. A few days before she had managed to come by railway from Edinburgh to St. Andrews, arriving when it was dark. They did not know at home that she was seriously ill. She was not fit to walk a quarter of a mile. But, God knows how, and with what unutterable extremity of suffering, she struggled up the steep hill those dark five miles and fell down at her

father's threshold. She was laid in her bed, and never rose from it again : she was barely twenty. It was a heart-breaking story. ' My poor girl, why did you not come to me ? I should have been thankful to have had you driven out ! ' She looked at me solemnly and said, ' I thought of that when I had come a good bit on the way and thought I was never to get here ; but I was not able to walk back, and it was late, late and dark.' She did not know the way certainly ; the family had flitted since she had gone to service. Twice more, always in the wonderful October stillness and sunshine, I went out again and saw the young sister who was to go before us ; and then she went very silently ; as homely Scotch folks do.

I cannot refrain from looking back to-day, over five-and-thirty years, to the time when I was the young country parson of Kirkpatrick-Irongray. I daresay I have told the story somewhere ; but that matters not. I was waiting in a very little cottage by the bedside of a poor man, ' just a labourer,' dying. He was thirty-five and had four little children. After lying silent for a while, he said he would like to see them, and the poor wife brought them to the bedside. He could speak quite distinctly, though the change came in an hour ; and I thought he would say something of parting advice, were it only to bid them be good children and kind to their mother. Yet all he did was just to take each of the three elder children by the hand, and to say *Gude-day*. As for the youngest, a wee thing of two years old, he said to it, ' Will ye give me a bit kiss ? ' And the mother lifted up the wondering child to do so. ' Say *ta-ta* to your faither,' she said. ' *Ta-ta*,' said the little boy, with a loud, cheerful voice, and then at once ran out of the cottage to play with some companions. Then poor David closed his eyes, and some tears ran down his cheek. But he said

no more. We are an undemonstrative race. We have not words to say what we feel ; and if we had, we should be *blate* to use them. It was the abundance of that poor friend's heart that choked his utterance, and brought down his last farewell to a greeting with which he might have parted from a neighbour for a few hours. He was weary, weary too ; and so *Gude-day* was his only word.

I remember how touched Stanley was when I told him of a parting I had seen. A lad of twenty, very well known to me, died. He left a widow mother, a sister and two brothers, younger than himself. He had been their main support (only *ætatis* twenty), and he had been full of anxieties as to what should become of them. His last words were, holding the hand of the brother next himself in years, and looking at the poor sobbing woman, ' Try and do as weel's ye can ! ' The great Dean said these were grand and all-comprehending words. I heard them. Believe me one knows it. It is thus that homely Scots die.

#### LITTLE YOU KNOW.

. . . . Little you know, educated folk, of the circumstances of trial in which harder workers than you are getting through the task of this gloomy winter day. To begin, they got up very early. You say, That is not much. Try it ! You say, They get accustomed to it. So may you, by doing it always. I know one who, just fifteen times, helping in a certain work of which good has come, got up on winter mornings at half-past four, and went a three-hours' journey to Ephesus, there to fight as St. Paul says he fought. The dismalness, the ghastliness of these mornings he often recalled with a shiver : though no remembrance is the least like the awful reality. But this is by way

of parenthesis. Having got up so early, the workers I have in my mind go out, into the bitter weather, into the dreadful muddy fields. Go and walk ten miles through them: and then say how you feel. Cockney poets write of 'the country green'; and a London man, in *The Times*, spoke of the labour of the farm-workers, who 'work out,' as 'the sweetest of all industry.' Just yesterday, on a day of keen frost, which yet left the roads deep with mud, and the fields sticky, I talked with six young women, each with a hook in her hand, who, after the mid-day meal, were going to take again to work on an expanse of turnips. They looked sturdy and rosy: they were quite cheerful, and they spoke frankly and pleasantly. But they said the work was very cold: they had each walked more than a mile from home before beginning it at 7.30 A.M., when it was still barely daylight. One said the work was extremely dirty, and very wetting both for feet and everything else; and till work ceased with the failing light there was no chance of changing their soaked garments and shoes. I don't say that with it all they seemed very sorry for themselves. But I know that you, my reader, would be very sorry for yourself with half the reason. Twice, in the last week, each day for more than seven hours, did the writer walk over a country tract of some miles' extent, entering many cottages and talking with their inmates. To many readers this is an appointed duty; a profoundly interesting duty, and always growing more interesting. When he got home, covered with mud, having waded through wet fields and miry farm-ways, the keen east wind blowing steadily and rawly over that bleak country-side, thinking he had done a good day's work, he thought of many, seen that day, who are always experiencing that rude weather and those rough surroundings: not one of them but went

through thrice what he did in those hours ; and resolved to do what might be done here to get you, gentle reader, to think of them and feel for them. They don't want your help. They never ask any help. I never knew a ploughman ask to have his children educated free, even in a place where well-paid artisans are not ashamed to do so : never once : and I have known such a place for many years. But all I ask is, Think kindly of such. Try to put yourself in their place. Think how poorly you could struggle through such work. Think how poorly they are paid : the homeliest food and clothing and lodging all they earn : just the patriarch's 'bread to eat and raiment to put on.' Think of the little children, going out each wet cold morning two and three miles to school over those ways which you and I grumble to traverse for once. Three days since, on a lonely and slippery path through specially desolate fields, two miles to walk without a dwelling near, I met, as the winter evening had darkened, a brave little boy of eight years old, coming home from school, setting his face towards the gloomy waste. He was about half-a-mile from home : quite alone : perfectly content, and a very little thing and a kind word sent him on his way bright and happy. And, going on, I found to my cost what sort of path that little man had travelled. It is a little thing to tell : but I would you had seen the sturdy figure, so very small, and so lonely, walking manfully along in the cold gloaming : God bless him ! Education is a great thing : and the State may fitly require of every parent that his children be educated. But when the details of the enforcement of this duty are pressed upon one, I confess one does not like them much. That same day, some miles off, I had gone into a cottage in a lonely place, where were five little children under the care of a little girl of twelve. Enter-

ing, I beheld with surprise a frightened look upon each of the faces: and the child left in charge of the rest burst out, ' Little Jane couldna go to school this week, for a bad cold, but she's goin' on Monday.' ' Whom do you take me for ? ' was the natural enquiry. The answer was, ' You're the school inspector.' ' Oh no, I'm not : Little Jane is quite right to be at home : I did not come here to scold you.' And, being assured that she was quite safe, what a number of things, that might well bring the tears to one's eyes, that motherless child told me ! Going away, I remembered with what wrath I had risen against the vile clap-trap of the Bishop who declared that he would rather see a nation free than sober : as if mortals bound by the chain of the most degrading of sins could be called free ; and as if you would not, if you could, save a madman from himself. But I felt just a little inclined in the Prelate's direction : feeling that to have education pressed upon one under legal pains and penalties was sad.

I had meant to say, before coming to an end, that you know little indeed of what any hard work is. All hard work is a very solitary thing. The many processes of thought, the many perplexities, the sustained strain, implied in even three hours of writing : how incommunicable they are to another ! All mental exertion is very lonely : the worker is quite cut off from other folk, and must bear his own burden. But there is not space for that to-day. It is enough to ask you who do your work in dry and warm places, and are not frozen nor drenched in doing it, to think very kindly and sympathetically of many quite near you whose work is very rough, very dirty, very hard on body and soul, and very poorly paid. *Rural* is a beautiful word. *The Country* sounds musical to one in populous cities pent. And *Arcadian* sums

all pleasant sights, scents, and sounds. But you, Edinburgh and Glasgow women, living this winter-time in pleasant parts of the town: and even Edinburgh and Glasgow men, Little you know of the stern Fact!

### THE LONG DAY WANES.

This was a lovely October afternoon. The air had that miraculous stillness which always brings back the beautiful iron-gray woods after you have passed the Rootin' Bridge with its waterfall, and are going on towards the bare tract where Carlyle . . . lived. There had been bright sunshine all the forenoon, but later the light was subdued, and all the western sky was pale gold. I went away out alone to take that Saturday walk which hitherto had always been taken in company. . . . To-day, along the sea-side, above the cliffs, looking on the famous bay: and so to the Cathedral: where rest the old and wearied of St. Andrews, and many of the fair and young too. . . . 'I'm soon coming down to the east end of the town,' were the words of one of my best and wisest elders, when I climbed St. Nicholas's Brae to see him near the end. Of a truth they have gathered there. As Dr. John Brown said, 'I have far more dead friends than living.' Yet now I do not find it sad but cheering to walk about on that sacred ground: which, not thinking at all of the associations of these latter days, Dean Stanley used to call 'as sacred a spot as any within the British Isles.'

Coming back through the little pointed arch in the grand old gateway of the Abbey, there was solemn South Street. The leaves of the limes on either hand had grown thin: and to-day they are tremulous, twinkling in a breeze which has its suggestion of what

season is coming on. The ancient street runs east and west, and at the west end there is that cold yellow blaze over all the sky. Midway (they set it down 783 years since *in mediâ civitate*, and there it is still) we come to the great Parish Church ; thirty years my kirk : and I look at it continually, trying to get every aspect in light and dark into memory : yet how strange it often seems to me yet ! To-day the trees which hide it in summer are growing bare, showing the great, gaunt walls and huge windows which testify to their awful taste who pulled the mediæval fabric about, just this time a hundred years. Walking slowly by, one looks at it very kindly ; as though saying to it, ' You have in these long centuries belonged to innumerable people, very queer people some of them : my turn is short in your æonian history, but for this little while you belong to my colleague and me.' The old edifice smiled back a grim recognition : as though saying, ' You run your course very quickly when compared with mine.'

#### OF REMEMBRANCE.

. . . . Sitting, my friend, by the evening fireside : sitting in your easy-chair, at rest : and looking at the warm light on the rosy face of your little boy or girl, sitting on the rug by you : do you ever wonder what kind of remembrance these little ones will have of you, if God spares them to grow old ? Look into the years to come : think of that smooth face lined and roughened ; that curly hair gray ; that expression, now so bright and happy, grown careworn and sad ; and you long in your grave. Of course, your son will not have quite forgot you : he will sometimes think and speak of his father who is gone. What kind of remembrance will he have of you ? Probably very dim and vague.

You know for yourself, that when you look at your little boy in the light of the fire, who is now a good deal bigger than in the days when he first was able to put a soft hand in yours and to walk by your side, you have but an indistinct remembrance of what he used to be then. Knowing how much you would come to value the remembrance of those days, you have done what you could to perpetuate it. As you turn over the leaves of your diary, you find recorded with care many of that little man's wonderful sayings : though, being well aware that these are infinitely more interesting to you than to other people, you have sufficient sense to keep them to yourself. There are those of your fellow-creatures to whom you would just as soon think of speaking about these things as you would think of speaking about them to a jackass. And you have aided your memory by yearly photographs : thankful that such invaluable memorials are now possible ; and lamenting bitterly that they came so late. Yet, with all this help : and though the years are very few ; your remembrance of the first summer that your little boy was able to run about on the grass in the green light of leaves, and to go with you to the stable-yard and look with admiration at the horse, and with alarm at the pig, voraciously devouring its breakfast ; is far less vivid and distinct than you would wish it to be. Taught by experience, you have striven with the effacing power of time ; yet assuredly not with entire success. Yes ; your little boy of three years old has faded somewhat from your memory : and you may discern in all this the way in which you will gradually fade from his. Never forgotten, if you have been the parent you ought to be, you will be remembered vaguely. And you think to yourself, in the restful evening, looking at the rosy face, Now, when he has grown old, how will he remember me ? I shall have been gone for many a day

and year ; all my work, all my cares and troubles, will be over : all those little things will be past and forgot, which went to make up my life, and about which nobody quite knew but myself. The table at which I write, the inkstand, all my little arrangements, will be swept aside. That little man will have come a long, long way, since he saw me last. How will he think of me ? Will he sometimes recall my voice, and the stories I told, and the races I used to run ? Will he sometimes say to a stranger, ' That's his picture : not very like him ; ' will he sometimes think to himself, ' There is the corner where he used to sit ; I wonder where his chair is now ! '

Cowper, writing at the age of fifty-eight, says of his mother : ' She died when I had completed my sixth year, yet I remember her well. I remember too a multitude of maternal tenderesses which I received from her, and which have endeared her memory to me beyond expression.' For fifty-two years the oversensitive poet had come on his earthly pilgrimage, since the little boy of six last saw his mother's face. Of course, at that age, he could understand very little of what is meant by death ; and very little of that great truth which Gray tells us he discovered for himself, and which very few people learn till they find it by experience, that in this world a human being never can have more than one mother. . . .

Nobody likes the idea of being quite forgot. Yet sensible people have to make up their mind to it. And you do not care so much about being forgotten by those beyond your own family circle. But you shrink from the thought that your children may never sit down alone, and in a kindly way think for a little after you are dead. . . . Why should people with whom you have nothing to do grieve for you after you are dead, any more than look at you or think of you while you are

living? But it is a very different feeling, and an infinitely more respectable one, that dwells with the man who has outgrown silly sentimentalism; yet who looks at those whom he holds dearest; at those whose stay he is, and who make up his great interest in life; at those whom *he* will remember, and never forget, no matter where he may go in God's universe: and who thinks, Now, when the impassable river runs between,—when I am an old remembrance, unseen for many years,—and when they are surrounded by the interests of their after life, and daily see many faces but never mine; how will they think of me? Do not forget me, my little children whom I loved so much, when I shall go from you. I do not wish you (an honest man might say) to vex yourselves, little things; I do not wish you to be gloomy or sad: but sometimes think of your father and mother when they are far away. You may be sure that, wherever they are, they will not be forgetting you.

#### OF RESIGNATION.

. . . People smile, and fancy you are passing into romantic regions, when you make mention of the mistakes made by men and women in the choice of a partner in life. But there is nothing romantic here: it is the most prosaic truth that this choice utterly blights many lives: converts others into a succession of petty irritations and humiliations: pulls down some soaring souls to a realm of sordid details: disappoints and disillusionments human beings as nothing else can: and would eventuate in very frequent repentance but for the blessed power which is in decent folk of reconciling themselves to the inevitable, and of making the best of a bad bargain. Yet one has known a man to whom the bitter mistake meant that he should never

know a light heart any more. One has known a poor girl, when little more than a child (not, indeed, without great folly in those who should have been her guides), hopelessly ruin all her life. One wonders, thinking how such choices are made, that in many cases they turn out so well. With a large class, one sees this indissoluble engagement formed between young men and women who know next to nothing of one another. And one remembers that not merely principle and a good life, but likewise temper, temperament, likings and antipathies, habits and tendencies, make or mar the peace of domestic life. . . . I remember, many a year ago, a homely old man addressing a young man, lately married, in the downright words, 'I am glad to hear that your wife has good health; for *a delicate wife is a great plague!*' Those who heard the words knew that the good old man spoke from most adequate experience. It must be hard to compose a historical dissertation, or the like, in the house of small extent, in which dwells a woman of the noblest sentiments, but at the present hour in violent hysterics. 'What is life without sentiment?' was the almost unanswerable question once addressed to my friend Smith. But doubtless there are things even more indispensable. . . .

The sum of what counsel I venture to address to the reader is simple, yet is needed by human beings beyond numbering, both young and old. What we need is, in short, to take in and find out for ourselves the truth of the most worn commonplaces. The counsel is, briefly, Reconcile yourself (if you are to remain in this world at all) to the conditions of your being: do not vex yourself, and break your heart, struggling against what is Irremediable. Do not look to find here what is not to be found. Do not fancy that wiser and luckier folk have found it, and that you

would have found it too but for some unhappy mistake you made at a critical turning in your life. The mistakes you have made, if you be an ordinary mortal living an ordinary life, have not, in fact, done your life much harm. You are making just about as much of things in this world as it was in you to make at all. Make the best of the bargain you have made, in this or that. Doubtless you see it was not a perfectly wise bargain. You would not make it again. Had you been considerably wiser than Solomon you might never have made it at all. But you are in for it now. Make the best of things, in good-nature and cheerfulness. Do not mope, and keep thinking, thinking, how much better you might have done, and (like Mr. Bumble) how cheap you went. So doing, you will be making the very worst of things. You will be deliberately blackening the sky under which you must live if you have to live at all: you will grow into a curse to yourself and a nuisance to your neighbours. There is plenty for you to do: Go and do it. There are people a thousand times worse off than you: Try and help them. And for any sake, do not be always thinking about yourself. Get away from that unsatisfactory subject of contemplation. And be quite sure that if you have told your special friends, about ten times each, how unhappy you are, and how many blunders you have made, they are by this time most uncommonly sick both of you and them.

Being what you are, it is quite certain that if you had not done the foolish things you did, you would have done something else as bad or worse. You married early, when you could not afford it: you had some anxious years: days have been when it seemed the poor head was to go under water altogether. Well, but it did not. You have lived through these anxieties: Why recall them? You have got

upon firm ground : Be thankful : It is far more and better than you deserve. And the burden which lay on you so heavily may have saved you from making an inexpressible fool of yourself. A man of sixty dangling after some girl of five-and-twenty is an amazing and humbling object of contemplation. Even he suspects himself to be a fool : everybody around knows it. Now you, with your grown-up sons, and your resolute as well as *placens uxor*, are pretty safe not to make a fool of yourself in that particular way. Other ways are open to you. But not one which leads to manifestations quite so deplorable. It is likely enough you would advise a friend not to take the turning you did. A man who has a mother-in-law will generally counsel any mortal to marry an orphan. But this comes of your knowing the evils you have, and being unaware of those which are waiting round the corner, and from which no earthly lot is free. You must take all things here, your profession, your wife, your house, your horses, your servants, your native country with its climate, all your environment, for Better for Worse. A friend worries you by little weaknesses : but he is better than no friend at all. He may be likened to a gift of a thousand pounds, subject to a deduction of two hundred and fifty. It is a disadvantage about a locomotive engine that it gets so hot. But you must accept the engine under that deduction. If you, being a human being, living in this imperfect system of things, will break away from everything which has its inconveniences, you will leave yourself without any possessions or surroundings whatsoever.

To speak gravely : One remarks, in these advancing years, that the great anxiety and care of worthy men and women, growing old, are about their children : the lesser ones, still going to school : the bigger ones, for whom you are seeking an aim in life, or who have

gone far away. No doubt, if you had no children, you would be free from many anxious thoughts. The income would go much further. The furniture and the painting of your house would last much longer. You could indulge in many luxuries, now impossible. You might buy books without stint, and cross the Alps yearly. But you would not have these selfish indulgences at the price. It is a cheerless thing, a childless home. No one will bear with you in the last fretfulness, and smooth the last steps of your way, like your own boy or girl. If there be in you any good at all, it has been brought out mainly by the continual presence and charge of your children. And you have had gleams of a pure and unselfish happiness, which are unknown in a lonely life. Had you kept clear of the responsibilities of life, and given no hostages to fortune, you would, no doubt, have presented a narrow mark to the shafts of care. But, unless you were a very poor creature indeed, every time you heard the laughter of the little ones, and watched their winsome ways, their thoughtless merriment, you would have felt that you had missed the best happiness of this life. And to do that of your own free-will is surely the greatest of all mistakes. Your library may be full of beautifully-bound volumes, your carpets unworn, your walls unmarked by little fingers: no sudden noises may jar your nerves: no eager little face look in when you are in the very middle of a complicated sentence, and break the tenor of your thoughts. And you never yet saw the childish eyes close upon this world: nor received the last kiss from lips that were growing cold: when Somebody (as of old) 'called to Himself a little child.' You never knew that terrible trial, which no faith and no hope could make anything other. But neither did you ever see the bright looks lighted up when you return

from a brief absence: nor did little pattering feet run to meet you. You never were earnestly questioned as to what you had brought: having earnestly considered London shop windows in the search for something to bring. You may have been told, but you do not know, as you might, that these little creatures (coming from where Wordsworth tells us), whether abiding with you here, or gone on before you, are the instruments in the Best Hand to bring out the very best that can be made of His creatures here. All that good is worth having, even at what it costs. A great deal has to be paid for it, no doubt. But unless in morbid and transient moods, you would not wish to have done without it.

Let the teaching of these pages be briefly summed up in a closing word. There is a great deal of margin in human nature, and a great power of recovering itself after it has gone wrong. You have eaten and drunk many things that were bad for you, yet not been much the worse for it. And if your lot have been an average one, you need not fancy that you have materially spoilt your life, though you see now that you have made a vast number of sad mistakes. There is comfort to many now getting far on in the pilgrimage in the thought that, though there has been an infinity of follies and blunders, only too well remembered, yet in the upshot things are just about as well with you as (your nature and surroundings being what they are) they could have been: and it was not in you to do much more than, in fact, you have done.

Therefore, instead of moaning over days past, with their opportunities missed, and their idiotic sayings and doings, we shall all set ourselves to do the best we can in the days which yet remain. And if there

be blots on the page which can never be rubbed out where we are, there is the supreme consolation that some day we may hope to turn over a quite new leaf, and to make a quite fresh start, far away.

### SORROWS OF CHILDHOOD.

. . . Then a great trouble, always pressing heavily on many a little mind, is that it is overtasked with lessons. You still see here and there idiotic parents trying to make infant phenomena of their children, and recording with much pride how their children could read and write at an unnaturally early age. Such parents are fools: not necessarily malicious fools, but fools beyond question. The great use to which the first six or seven years of life should be given is the laying the foundation of a healthful constitution in body and mind; and the instilling of those first principles of duty and religion which do not need to be taught out of any books. Even if you do not permanently injure the young brain and mind by prematurely overtasking them,—even if you do not permanently blight the bodily health and break the mind's cheerful spring, you gain nothing. Your child at fourteen years old is not a bit farther advanced in his education than a child who began his years after him; and the entire result of your stupid driving has been to overcloud some days which should have been among the happiest of his life. It is a woeful sight to me to see the little forehead corrugated with mental effort, though the effort be to do no more than master the multiplication table: it was a sad story I lately heard of a little boy repeating his Latin lesson over and over again in the delirium of the fever of which he died, and saying piteously that indeed he could not do it better. I don't like to see a little face looking

unnaturally anxious and earnest about a horrible task of spelling ; and even when children pass that stage, and grow up into school-boys who can read Thucydides and write Greek iambics, it is not wise in parents to stimulate a clever boy's anxiety to hold the first place in his class. That anxiety is strong enough already ; it needs rather to be repressed. It is bad enough even at college to work on late into the night ; but at school it ought not to be suffered for one moment. If a lad takes his place in his class every day in a state of nervous tremor, he may be in the way to get his gold medal, indeed ; but he is in the way to shatter his constitution for life.

We all know, of course, that children are subjected to worse things than these. I think of little things early set to hard work, to add a little to their parents' scanty store. Yet, if it be only work, they bear it cheerfully. This afternoon I was walking through a certain quiet street, when I saw a little child standing with a basket at a door. The little man looked at various passers-by ; and I am happy to say that, when he saw me, he asked me to ring the door-bell for him : for, though he had been sent with that basket, which was not a light one, he could not reach up to the bell. I asked him how old he was. ' Five years past,' said the child, quite cheerfully and independently. ' God help you, poor little man ! ' I thought ; ' the doom of toil has fallen early upon you ! ' If you visit much among the poor, few things will touch you more than the unnatural sagacity and trustworthiness of children who are little more than babies. You will find these little things left in a bare room by themselves,—the eldest six years old,—while the poor mother is out at her work. And the eldest will reply to your questions in a way that will astonish you, till you get accustomed to such things. I think that

almost as heart-rending a sight as you will readily see is the misery of a little thing who has spilt in the street the milk she was sent to fetch, or broken a jug, and who is sitting in despair beside the spilt milk or the broken fragments. Good Samaritan, never pass by such a sight ; bring out your twopence ; set things completely right ; a small matter and a kind word will cheer and comfort an overwhelmed heart. That child has a truculent step-mother, or (alas !) mother, at home, who would punish that mishap as nothing should be punished but the gravest moral delinquency. And lower down the scale than this, it is awful to see want, cold, hunger, rags, in a little child. I have seen the wee thing shuffling along the pavement in great men's shoes, holding up its sorry tatters with its hands, and casting on the passengers a look so eager, yet so hopeless, as went to one's heart. Let us thank God that there is one large city in the Empire where you need never see such a sight, and where, if you do, you know how to relieve it effectually ; and let us bless the name and the labours and the genius of Thomas Guthrie ! It is a sad thing to see the toys of such little children as I can think of. What curious things they are able to seek amusement in ! I have known a brass button at the end of a string a much prized possession. I have seen a grave little boy standing by a broken chair in a bare garret, solemnly arranging and rearranging two pins upon the broken chair. A machine much employed by poor children in country places is a slate tied to a bit of string : this, being drawn along the road, constitutes a cart ; and you may find it attended by the admiration of the entire young population of three or four cottages standing in the moorland miles from any neighbour. . . .

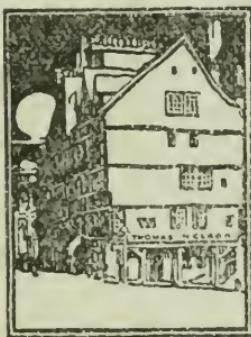
It is a cheap and easy thing to make a little heart happy. May this hand never write another essay if

it ever wilfully miss the chance of doing so ! It is all quite right in after-years to be careworn and sad. We understand these matters ourselves. Let others bear the burden which we ourselves bear, and which is doubtless good for us. But the poor little things ! I can enter into the feeling of a kind-hearted man who told me that he never could look at a number of little children but the tears came into his eyes. How much these young creatures have to bear yet ! I think you can, as you look at them, in some degree understand and sympathise with the Redeemer, who, when He 'saw a great multitude, was moved with compassion toward them.' Ah, you smooth little face (you may think), I know what years will make of you, if they find you in this world. And you, light little heart, will know your weight of care !

And I remember, as I write these concluding lines, who they were that the Best and Kindest this world ever saw liked to have near Him ; and what the reason was He gave why He felt most in His element when they were by His side. He wished to have little children round Him, and would not have them chidden away ; and this because there was something about them that reminded Him of the Place from which He came. He liked the little faces and the little voices,—He to whom the wisest are in understanding as children. And oftentimes, I believe, these little ones still do His work. Oftentimes, I believe, when the worn man is led to Him in childlike confidence, it is by the hand of a little child.

THE END.

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